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SANCTÆ VIGILIÆ



S A N C T Æ V I G I L I Æ
OR
DEVOUT MUSINGS ON
THE HEAVENS
IN VERSE



BY THE REV. C. D. STRONG M. A.

CURATE OF BRAMPTON ABBOTS HEREFORDSHIRE

LATE OF MAGDALEN HALL OXFORD



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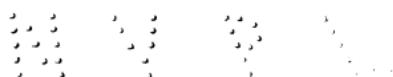
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

R 1945 L



P R E F A C E.

HE Psalmist by inspiration sings
“The heavens declare the glory
of God and the firmament shew-
eth his handy work.” He tells
us that there are voices reaching to this
world from the innumerable orbs that float
around us in endless space, whose melo-
dious vibrations are perceptible in all lands,
testifying not alone to the physical might
and skill of the all-wise Creator, to His
matchless and beautiful conceptions, but to
the righteousness bound up in His very es-
sence, and to the consequent unbroken equity
of His government. We learn also from the
same source, that the consideration of this



subject serves a twofold purpose, as it tends on the one hand to render the attributes of Jehovah illustrious in the eyes of man, and on the other to humble man in his own esteem. But it is to be lamented that whenever the Christian attempts any distinguishing survey of the starry regions, he is liable to be distracted or offended by the many heathen names given to the planets and constellations in different ages : and the classic mind, when occupied with these researches, finds it especially difficult to disengage itself from the impure associations of a dead mythology : at the same time it is obvious, that custom has given to these names such an unassailable prescriptive title, that their retention is not only expedient but necessary. However it should be a sufficient apology for their permanence ; that certain of them are recognized and transmitted to us in the pages of the Old Testament, and as assuredly the writers or rather the translators of those divine records intended no compliment to the heathen legends, by inserting

ende the titles of their gods or heroes; neither
s of can we be accused of any such intention,
and though we should occasionally use them or
es refer to them, as an acknowledged medium
en of poetical expression. But to turn the sub-
sh- ject of astronomy so as best to promote the
ble glory of God and the edification of the Chris-
ny tian, I have sought to direct the reader's
n- attention not merely through, but above and
ic beyond that doubtful maze, into a clearer
s, region where he will be more at liberty
f to expatiate spiritually, among the infinite
provinces of Jehovah's material kingdom.
Nevertheless whenever the pagan allusions
have bordered on any reasonable matter, or
seemed to be convertible for good, I have
always endeavoured to educe from them
whatever profitable reflection they were ca-
pable of yielding: at the same time I may
add that it has been more especially grati-
fying to my own feelings to seize upon those
ideas connected with the subject, which are
furnished by the far sublimer and truthful
notices of the prophets and apostles; and if

my endeavours shall have succeeded in disengaging the heavenly bodies from that mythological cloudiness which has so long, to a certain extent, bedimmed their glory and the glory of the Creator in them, and if, in any slight degree, I shall have rendered more audible those silvery tongues, whose office it is, to bear diversified messages of wisdom to the observant christian, I may humbly hope that the little labour and attention bestowed on these *vigiliae* "have not been in vain in the Lord."





CONTENTS.

	Page
Introduction	xi
ANTO	
1. The Solar System	1
2. The Sun's Path on the Ecliptic	19
3. The Northern Constellations	32
4. The Southern and Middle Groups	47
5. The Southern and Middle Groups con- tinued	58
6. Concluding Vision	70







INTRODUCTION.

BORNE on a gale of thought, my soul assay
Unusual flight above the climbing road
To Helicon, where living fountains play,
Full often sipped by numbers that have trod
Unsullied, raised above the vulgar throng,
The epic mountain or the meads of song :
Peer with an eagle's ardour, dare to view
Scenes ever open, but observed by few,
But should'st thou, floating above mortal sight,
Unfolding hues of earthly plumage there,
Chance to encounter the too burning light
Of flaming suns that seem around to glare ;
Forthwith the flutter of a feeble wing
Shall to the ground the Icarian warbler bring.
Back to her lowly seat the muse is driven
Her verse tho' colored in the rays of Heaven.







SANCTÆ VIGILIÆ.

CANTO I.

THE SOLAR SYSTEM.

“ O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all
the earth, who hast set thy glory above the heavens.”

PSALM VIII. ver. 1.

I.

HOW shall I launch into the boundless skies,
Unless protected by some guardian hand,
Or'midst vast worlds unknown, transported
How on the limits of creation stand, [rise,
Unless some arm of sovereign force shall guide
My trembling flight ? Awake inspire the shell
Of Praise, auspicious at my faltering side,
Blest Spirit, then thy wondrous deeds I'll tell ;
Impart the heat of thine enkindling fire, [rous lyre.
Then with emboldened touch I'll sweep th' adventu-

II.

Parent of love, thy power we dimly trace,
E'en in the blaze of that unwearied light,
That hurls his arrows over endless space,
Dread warfare waging with the realms of night ;
On whose retreat, He as a bridegroom drest,
Comes forth relumining the smiling orbs ;
¹ Altho' 'tis said within a ball of mist
Ever residing, He himself absorbs
The rays from clouds of glory thrown around,
And veils his sides opaque, within a depth profoun-

III.

Thou art his Ruler, whether in the zone
That binds the bosom of the East, concealed
He lies, or whether on his ample throne
Effixed,—causing the blushes to be revealed
Of dimpled morn. By Thee vast nations rise,
To gloomy dens the prowling rovers flee,
The pallid owlet to her cavern hies,
While o'er the Ocean shoots the genial ray,
To streak the high shore with its rosy gleam,
Ere yet it drinks the haze upon the secret st

IV.

O sun ! thy wings are tipped with dazzling gold,
Waving from spicy lands, whose balmy breath,
Exhaled from herb and shrub is upward rolled
To meet thee, and depends, a dewy wreath,
Upon the mountain crest; the Indus river
Next sparkles, and Euphrates, and the sand
Of Araby, the ruby waves which sever
Asia and Afric, next the peopled land
Of Europe gladdens in thy bright return,
Whose cities thickly set, like smoking altars burn !

V.

But further o'er the subject planets Thou,
Reignest supreme, within their courses fixed,
As their fleet cars in endless circuits go,
In orbits unentangled, and unmixed.
Source of attraction to their system wide
Revolving, Thou endurest, till the hand
Which did at first propel, shall cease to guide,
Then shall the pensile globes astounded stand,
Fall back confused, and toward their centre speed,
Till all their pomp is lost, in smoking ruin hid.

VI.

Gladly we know, that this life fostering flame
Is not concentrated or quenched here,
That seven planets meet the orient beam,
And fresh horizons to his glory rear.
Lo ! sunlit hours gild their verdant fields,
Till grateful night enwrap the weary globes ;
O God ! how wondrous is the hand which wields
The sceptre of this kingdom, and enrobes
Yon worlds with lustre, borrowed from the seat
Of thine own bliss supreme, where streams of glory
meet.

VII.

And ye awaiting satellites, which range
Around the sultan of the empire, drink
Of that o'er-flowing fountain as ye change
In dance unceasing, bound in airy link ;
Yes, ye depend, with all the sister spheres
Held in the solar influence, in turn
Sharing the genial light, the new-born stars,
Juno a queen immortalized, the urn
Of Ceres pouring bounty, Vesta's flame,
And Pallas of renown for pure unblemished fame.

VIII.

And e'en to ancient Uranus, his car,
Remotely toiling thro' the void expanse,
Those sunbeams reach; and tho' his circuit far
Outmeasures all the rest, Omnipotence [space,
Doth guide them struggling through th' Empyrean
Until they gladden on his rolling side,
² And with a garb of light his form embrace:
Nor do the shades of Ereb there abide,
Unbroken, for the silvery array
Of threefold lunar cresses, turneth night to day.

IX.

³ Saturn, thee next by poet feigned I sing,
Father of fabled gods, of heaven born,
Who of old fixed in Latium didst begin
The sciences, and didst with arts adorn
The golden age, now in the system hung,
Girt with a ring full like a crystal sea,
Thou, only thou the myriad worlds among
Thus beautified, whereon with festal glee,
Angelic trains might in alternate chant,
Fling o'er thy listening fields their voices jubilant..

X.

Mortals have dreamed, that from those planets rose
Of old, expressed by harp and tuneful tongue,
Strains of innocuous mirth, that there the throes
Of pain were nameless, and the envious throng
Of cares unknown ; that there religion grew
In fruitful soil, and happiness had fixed
Her seat in permanence, that myriads drew
Joy from ambrosial fountains all unmixed
With aught of ill, and Righteousness beloved
Stood firm in every heart, by hellish arts unmoved.

XI.

Reflection just—are not our bounties given
To them, the season's annual return,
The warmth of spring unfailing sent from heaven,
Their teeming sides with verdure to adorn ?
Are not their surfaces with hills o'er-spread,
With valleys winding thro' the deep defile ?
Shall no inhabitant those mountains tread,
Or joyous face within those vallies smile ?
Shall no intelligence these beauties tend,
And from adoring hosts no breath of praise ascend ?

XII.

It may not be, then towards the deathless land
Bear me, where streams of gladness never fail,
Where joys innumEROUS as the winged sand,
Wrapt o'er the surging ocean on a gale
That swept the desert ere it reached the sea,
Descend without impair ; successive too,
As those full waves which follow to the lee,
And raise their crests upon the distant blue,
Ah let my spirit to those realms repair,
Far from the mixed abode of sin, and death, and fear.

XIII.

But lo ! there turns a larger ball within
The bright circumference of solar heat,
‘ Bounding through space, of pagan gods the king
Jove who revolves in more assuming state
About his ruler, whirled in rapid flight,
Thus they believed that all their gods were set
Inferior to one excelling light,
A vast unknown, eternal Potentate,
Without whose being they had never been,
Their rites ne'er handed down, their mystic forms
unseen.

xiv.

And yon fair star, her vivid jasper hue
Flashing within the ocean, colored deep
With tints of Evening, smiles as if she knew
Her birth-place in the heaving waves will sleep
So tranquilly beneath, save where the spray
Opening its snow-white arms, reveals a breast
Maternal to her child, and courts her eye,
As she retires to the burnished west;
Closely attendant on the lord of day,
Till all his fiery pomp hath sunk and passed away.

xv.

Jove and this planet do alternate rule,
The shadowy lids of twilight ope and close,
Each in their turn and season beautiful,
Tho' that which leads the morn more glory shews,
For he who from the dews of prophecy
Did spring, a herald from the realms afar,
Himself the source and sum of majesty,
⁵ Assumed the title of the Morning Star,
And sith He rose, a spiritual dawn
Leads on eternal day, on winged ages borne.

xvi.

Lurid as if with inward fury raging,
The Paynim god of battle scowls above
The dusky hill, scarcely his flame assuaging,
In the full clouds that o'er his brightness rove,
But though he seems to burn, when nearer seen
Th' illusion fails, his plume is gelid snow
Upon an arctic pole, his direful sheen
Of kindling armour is the ruby glow
Of continental earth, the emerald robe
About him flung the waters of a peaceful globe.

xvii.

Tellus I next perceive, mother of forms
Godly and excellent whose carmine dust
We venerate, august, though cruel storms
Woe-winged have triumphed since her side was thrust
Obliquely from the ancient style erect
And her inhabitants have further erred
From the straight will : to Thee I would direct
Pure thoughts, for strangely has thy history stirred
The hosts in glory and thy coasts have been
Of wrath and love inscrutable the wondrous scene.

XVIII.

But when at Heaven's word thy winding cope
And axis mystical, ceasing to bend,
And rising from the cinq millennial stoop,
Shall toward the primal line its movement tend,
Disastrous clouds with portents big shall loom,
Th' imprisoned forces of the central heat,
Bursting the rocky barrier, will consume
Mankind and brute ; the fields, the towering seat
Of empire, the temple's dome and glistening spire,
All in one deluge fused, in lurid flames expire.

XIX.

To the affrighted nations and amazed,
The spheres will seem to stagger and to flee
As when autumnal hurricane hath seized
With hideous grasp a fully laden tree.
At every gust the ruddy fruits descend.
O day supreme, what mortal shall survive
Amid the general wrack ? those who ascend
The rock of ages, and attention give
To watch and prayer, the valiant christian's shield,
While to the statutes of the Lord they full obedience
yield.

XX.

Then rest, until, from off the mundane soil
All guilt expurged, the joyous globe secure,
Revels in æther's calm. The dark turmoil
Is hushed, for from the olden cynosure
The pole is changed. The tranquil rod of peace
Swayed by Messiah from the pristine hill
Of Zion animates the sunk and seared face
Of Palestina. To His sovereign will
All nations bend and loud hosannas sing [king.
To Him who throned in majesty, reigneth Judæa's

XXI.

Then shall the field of Mamre, and the plain
Of Sharon and Megiddo with the grove
Covering the vale of Sychar, bloom again,
A maze of loveliness. The banished dove
Hies to the Jordan brink, and Tabor's mount
Above the luscious palm luxuriates.
High-lifted Lebanon, his ridge the fount
Of icy rivulets, with rapture greets
The tribes of Israel, whose loud joys assail
His cedar'd gloom, and with delight his mighty heart
regale.

XXII.

Ah, little world, now superdignified
Among the starry orbs, a tiny mote,
How is thy very substance glorified !
As o'er the void celestial thou dost float.
To the great God so dear, thy miry clay,
That for his only Son he deigned to take
A spiritual manhood form of Thee !
So vast the mystery that the theme would break
The strings of harmony, if harp should dare,
For such unequalled love, an equal strain to rear !

XXIII.

⁶ And where is Maia's son light Mercury,
Ermes the fabled messenger of Jove,
Swift as the feathered shot of archery
On winged sandal who was wont to move ?
That star more verily is like, I trow,
• To Uriel or spirit near the throne,
So bathed in light as to be hidden though,
Near the prime fount, so closely round the Sun
He turns, that thence with e'en unaided eye,
One might the burning plains and torrid courts espie

XXIV.

Yea, we might scrutinize the dark abyss
Of solar cavities within the cone
Of spent volcanoes, whose capaciousness
Would eat entire continents if thrown
Into their crater's depth ; of vasty height
Were these, huge mountains, each a world in girth,
Converging to a point, whence volumes bright
Outshot, the offspring of a struggling birth,
'Tis said those spots more like plutonian shades,
Increasing veil his disk, and hide the dazzling glades.

XXV.

What if the surface of the sun still more
In gaping fissures riven, should appear
Black as the heart of *Aetna*, and the door
Of fair day closing bring in darkness drear ;
Might we not then suppose some terror pending ?
Wide ruin near, and the expected doom
Of nations, when the judge's dread descending
Shall rend the heavens, and divest the tomb,
Of millions roused to judgment, when how few,
Will hear the malison unmoved e'en of the pure and
true !

XXVI.

But ere the course of other globes we trace,
We should not heedless pass the sister Moon,
Who flings more lustre from her changeful face
Than all the astral band a gracious boon
To man she after cursive ages still,
Her votive path along the azure treads,
Unfailing aye her silver horn to fill,
Duly the months fulfilling, while she leads
'The jocund Nereids in her weltering train,
Whose song and tripping dance delight the listening
main.

XXVII.

Thou art all pleasing, whether in meek state
Thro' opening skies upon the darksome earth
Thou peerest, from that calm reginal seat
Tempering the night, or with exulting birth
Outsailing golden clouds, thro' many a wreath
Of trees umbrageous, streaming mellow light
Down on the turf and withered leaves beneath ;
Or thro' some antique ruin, whose grey height
O'ertops the grove with mantling ivy crowned,
Repaintest every arch amid the gloom profound.

XXVIII.

'Emblem of that innocuous church, who o'er
The shadowy disk of human darkness reign,
While in the realms of light their spirits soar,
Unsullied by the mingled crowds who stain
A sinful globe, with godlike mien they rove
Radiant with coronets, clothed in snowy dress,
Amid a verdant paradise of love,
Of purity, and joy, the blest impress
Of Heaven and its Chief, thus robed they give
Refulgence all abroad, which they athence receive.

XXIX.

'Now would I wander in the lonely aisle
Of Ethelstan, what time the melting beam
Strives thro' the amber coloring to smile
Upon the gothic shrines, here let me dream,
And in deep thought's full ecstasy dissolved,
Inhale the inspired stillness that dwells
Within those archways various and involved,
And by that pale lamp mark the dusky cells
Wherein the ancient dust of elders lie,
Sheltered with crumbling forms in carved masonry.

XXX.

Here do I read memorials of saints
Long since deceased, of thine Q Cantilupe,
Favored by time, for still he clearly paints
Thy record in yon foliated group
Of Perbeck pilasters, not sparing thee
But thine ; thus Christian worthiness outlives
The dregs and ashes of mortality,
And where no graved entablature receives
The transcript of their virtue, God doth keep
A living Chronicle above, awhile their spirits slee

XXXI.

Here lie entombed each in bowery niche,
The puissant Lords of Pembridge and Bohun,
Peter de Aqua blanca, who did reach
His Crosier from Savoy, Robertus de Betun
Guilliem de Vere, and Abbot Foliot
Who erst retiring to his couch did hear
This voice, Dum tu revolvis tot et tot,
Deus tuus est Iscariot, unmoved with fear
He answered aptly, from the words of truth,
Mentiris O Diabole, est mihi Deus Sabaoth.

XXXII.

on ye dead in sacred quietude,
e Cathedral's breathing stillness,
filled aye, save when its magic mood
ounds descending from the dizziness
onder height, the distant chimings move ;
hen accordant to the choral throats
arbling singers thro' the stony grove
gloomy transept, crash the pealing notes
ie rich organ thrilling rapturous praise,
illing to the ear, in dulcet symphonies.

XXXIII.

his reproachful to a heedless world
ersed in traffic or in constant toil,
most to those, who in the mazes whirl'd
leasure, gadding in the gay turmoil
fe, ne'er deem that in this hallow'd fane
stival is spread of deep repose
souls devoutly coveting to gain
ess to Jesus, whose mild presence glows
een but felt where'er believers meet
x holy vows to pay, His grace to impetrata.

XXXIV.

Would that some hand might soon the waste repair
Of this dismantled edifice, and a prop
Lend to her shafts and flowery corbels fair ;
Her priests and waiting people cherish hope,
That the pink lips of morning oft shall kiss
The venerable roof and studded tower,
And golden eve her warmest tints impress
Upon her pinnacles, that as the hour
Of midnight palls, Selene's melting ray
May thro' her renovated screen and vista stray.



CANTO II.

THE SUN'S PATH ON THE ECLIPTIC.

"Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his
season?"

Job. xxxviii. 32.

I.

ND now to Thee I turn Most Holy Power,
While in my ardent flight I further range;
Let not as yet my meditation lower
descend; or from its high intention change
sing thy name, O chief and fairest good.
ine effort still assist, all praise to give
that creative mind from whence the flood
light first issued, which those orbs receive,
ch in his ample urn, yea those which stand
r from our Sun remote and his attending band.

II.

'O wondrous God, who from Thy central dwe
Unseen and glorious ever, dost control
The clustering systems of all worlds, fulfilling
Each their own destiny ; none dare to roll
Astray from Thee, the faintest nebulae
Composed of countless stars, do gravitate
Each round his nearest sun, and eke obey
The impulse of Thy will, that force secrete,
Whilst o'er the buoyant space, the lucid tide
Sweeps round a realm of light, by mortals undesc.

III.

Libra, thro' flowing paths of verse I speed
Toward thy constellation first, in whom
The genial Sun appears, what time the seed
Is cast upon the earth, what time the sum
Of night and day in equal scales are hung ;
Poised in the dubious sky above the hill
²Of Mænalus, full joyously thy throng
Of tapers glisten, where the Virgin still
Sails with her train pursuivant, and the sting
Of Scorpio escapes on her empurpled wing.

IV.

But when seared leaves are strewing, and grey mists
 Exhale from stagnant fens, infected air,
 The sunbeams dart from Scorpio, where he twists
 His poisonous tail around the ankle bare
 Of Serpentarius, whose cumbrous tread
 Crushes the reptile's crest. Here Christian, view
 The Lord who bruised the sin-envenomed head
 Of Satan, while his piercing darts he threw
 Into the Victor's heel; that deadly foe
 Condemned to writhe at length in pangs of endless
 woe.

V.

This form stellated, with mixed beauty shines,
 Coiled as a belt across the Lactean way,
 Sparkling with jewels strung in various lines;
 Thus doth the enemy of souls assay
 To cloak his malice with insidious grace,
 'The better to subvert the cause of truth.
 But now the year declines with rapid pace,
 The day scarce opes her eyne for drowsy sloth,
 Receding and abridging, as the Sun [run.
 Surveys his shortened course as well nigh spent and

VI.

But next adventuring among the sons
Of Sagittarius, and o'er a sea
Driving of milky waves, He scarcely shuns
The archer's quick and sharp artillery,
Until with arrows from his own red bow
He scorched his neck, and even rent in twain
The azure scarf which tossing breezes blow
About his locks, the wide Ecliptic plain
Now opens free, in vain the monster strove,
Unscathed with reckless force the solar coursers
move.

VII.

Yet somewhat dimm'd with that contention dire
And reft of strength, the weary steeds descend
The Zodiac line, the wheels of kindling fire
Emitting fainter heat, as thence they tend
To Capricornus ; who altho' less fierce
Than Sagittarius, with erected front
Resists, until Promethean darts empierce
His shaggy sides and stern eye militant
Hurled by the Conqueror ; who to amity
Inclined, had sought in vain this second broil to flee.

VIII.

A snow white chief now rose, and bid his ranks
Advance with weltering storms, and mingle war ;
The waters hasten flight, o'er all their banks
Hoarse rivers break, the headlong torrents roar,
Till seized by Eurus, all at once they stand
Congealed, the falling flood adown the height
Arrested hangs, as if by Elfin wand
Changed to a firm pellucid stalactite ;
The Sun too fails, and nature to the reign
Of the hoar king submissive, yields her sad domain.

IX.

But lo Aquarius is hastening down
His feeble lord to greet, who hardly climbs
The steep ascent ; the panting coursers groan,
Oppressed with toil, and drag their quivering limbs,
While low the wheels in dank morasses sink ;
Gently the youth from out the bending urn
Pours to the thirsting steeds and bids them drink ;
Meek looks of gratitude to him they turn,
Then straight refreshed, the journey they pursue.
Surmount the stubborn height, and valiant feats re-
new.

X.

Their glittering feet with frantic vigor speed
To Aries, from their flaming nostrils wide
Dilated, breathing winds ; anon they tread
On new born herbs, and up the vernal side
Of the Ecliptic rise, the charioteer
Hails the midway ascent and bids them rest,
For of the night and day an equal share
Is here remeasured to the Earth, whose breast
Swelled at this genial season, gladly pours
Her streams of various juice to trees and opening
flowers.

XI.

And Sol's bright sword divides the belt which ties
The twofold forms of Pisces, as they lie
Athwart his path, and on his journey hies ;
These mark the spring tide, when the slimy sea
Burdened with finny millions beats the shore,
What time all vigorous with primal heat
The headlong rivers to the ocean pour
Their scaly fry, released from the retreat
Of watery cells by wanton nature hewn,
Down, where the lurking nets await the annual boon.

XII.

And as to meet the horns of Aries
Proceeds the fostering Orb, the sons of men
To thee should yield the tributary praise,
All bounteous Lord, for thy rich hand again
Is rife with gifts ; down from a thousand hills
The fleecy flocks descend and grace the field ;
With lambs twin-born his arms the shepherd fills,
And bears them home, their tender forms to shield
From damp or wind, while others stronger grown
Sport round the sunny glade, and top the mossy stone.

XIII.

But 'twas a boon, passing ten thousand times
All earthly good, when Thine ownself to man
Was given—to a race with hideous crimes
Abased ; who still precipitately ran
On death and woe. If then O Lamb of Heaven,
Thou hadst not brought availing sacrifice,
This cursed world had been for ever driven
From hope of bliss, whereat we hail the price,
The ransom of thy dear atoning blood
Beyond all bounty else, our chief and matchless good.

XIV.

Spring gives the hand to joyous summer's prime,
While the Far-darter stationed in the eye
Of Taurus, in his rampant rage sublime,
Shoots forth his arrows o'er the pastures dry,
Withering the juices of the glebe, and sending
The thirsty herd to ruminate their lot,
'Neath oaken shades, where lucid brooks descending,
Forsake the pebbly marge ; to this cool spot
They wend from sultry meads, and stem the flood,
Or from the thymy bank pluck out the savoury food.

XV.

And summer's lips with promises are fraught,
Forth-coming joys are in her smiles express,
A vivid robe of emerald she brought,
And every field in jocund colours drest,
From dulcet realms favonian gales attending,
The breathing fragrance gather as they pass,
The tribute paid by floral nations sending
Their incense forth, which greedy winds amass ;
And thence sail onward laden with the sum,
Of sweets from Indian shores, and Susa's amber gum.

XVI.

- 'Eftsoon the Pleiades like lamps of fire
Emerge from Atlas o'er the sparkling main,
As if the daughters of that ancient sire,
And the maternal cloud e'er spread between
His summit, and the flickering waves below ;
She to their fondling looks and lucent eyes
- ‡ Preferred his craggy points and heavy brow,
And from those waters' changeful reveries
- ¶ Fled to his arms, o'er whom in nightly dance,
- └ Depend the revelling stars at summer's near advance.

XVII.

The signs congenial with the seasons are,
Nature is telling love from every tongue
Of choral leaves, and love the skies declare,
For lo the fondling twins of Leda run
Athwart the space where vast Orion soars,
Unclothed they sport, the sign of fervent heat
Which by the zephyr mitigated, pours
Down thro' the cooling clouds, attempered meet [ers
For man and beast, those clouds with frowning show-
Laden, whose umber shade o'er all the welkin lowers.

XVIII.

But O my soul, how canst thou view this train
Of Deity, descending from the courts
Ætherial, and reaching to the plain
Terrestrial? or how the lowliest skirts
Contemplate thus, of His bedizened robe,
His mantle dight with flaming chrysolite
And jacinth, each a huge yet distant globe ;
And feel no inspiration at the sight,
Yea not be overpowered at the sense
Of that vast mind which framed such dread magni-
fidence ?

XIX.

And if the particles swept down from out
Those streets supernal, as they scattering fall
O'er the illuminated vault, be wrought
Into such beauty on the nightly pall,
Emblazoned ; what angelic tongue should dare
Or mortal mind, to picture the abode
Of Deity ? forbear, my soul forbear,
Until serene, thy sainted feet have trode
Within the hallowed portals, till there gleam
Full on thy ravished eye the new Jerusalem.

xx.

Stationed at length upon the utmost peak
Of the Ecliptic hill, the palfreys wait
The signal of decline, anon they slake
Their thirst at purling rills which irrigate
The verdant ridge, they pause ; on either side⁶
The Charioteer looks down, upon the right
Deep roses bloom, and lilies in their pride
Of snowy whiteness, shew their goblets bright,
Still lower down the purple violets peep,
And last the virgin snowdrop girds the shelvy steep.

xxi.

Adown the vernal bank the rapturous glee
Of feathered minstrels fills the scented air,
From lowly bush, and from expanded tree,
The seats of song. From mid descent we hear
The cuckoo's note, and catch the lulling strain
Of mellow blackbird in the hazel shade ;
But on the left declivity, restrain
All birds their warbling, as the months recede ;
And mourn the seasons' melancholy flow ;
The groves in silence held, reveal their pensive woe.

XXII.

Yet down that slope Sol cast his burning glance,
Across the plenteous cornfield's ripening ears,
Whose tops rose waving in fantastic dance,
Rich in autumnal radiance, as the hairs
Of his ambrosial head, nor was the bloom
Of scarlet poppy hidden from his ken,
Or laden branches of the velvet plum,
Or orchard rows with fruits of rosy stain,
While at the base enamelled meads were lost
In mists, as the cloudy line of dim and gathering host.

XXIII.

At length compelled by heaven's strict decree,
The chariot bounds from off the peerless hill :
Eftsoon the steeds a rampant Lion see,
Seeking with ravin his dark jaws to fill ;
Couchant he falls within the purple heather,
As Sol with hastening pace, more fiercely drove ;
Increasing heat, and fostering harvest weather ;
What time the ringdove wooes the gloomy grove ;
Where hemmed by phalanxes of golden grain
She hears the sickle crash, and marks the labouring
swain.

XXIV.

They pass the daring Lion, and espie
 A Virgin sitting in the beechen shade;
 Her yellow hairs were floating wantonly,
 And down her sides the plumage was displayed
 Of folded wing, and oft her graceful hand
 Directed heavenwards, as if to shew
 Whence good descended, then around she scanned
 The morning stars, and eyed the world below,
 In whose glad fields, the rustic bands were seen,
 And many a wain that rolled the dotted sheaves
 atween.

XXV.

Now pause, my strain, the Sun's long travels round
 Are told, his exploits on the Zodiac line,
 His upward toil to yonder mountain crowned
 With summer's bloom, and thence his deep decline,
 'His path from Libra till he joined again
 The poising scale, from whence in days of old
 'Tis said, the new-born earth her course began,
 Her side in azure lymph of æther rolled ;
 What time from Eden's boughs were seen depending
 Fruits of each luscious stain, sole, or in clusters
 bending.



CANTO III.

THE NORTHERN HEMISPHERE.

“ Lift up your eyes on high and behold, Who hath created these things, that bringeth out their hosts by number? He calleth them all by names, by the greatness of His might for that He is strong in power, not one faileth.”

ISAIAH xl. 26.

I

AR hence we wander to the Arctic spheres,
And take our range within the jetty dome
Arched overhead, where still the grisly
About the apex of that temple roam, [Bears
Where Draco curls his long stellated tail
And spreads his jaws terrific in the skies :
Soaring pre-eminent as if to scale
The peerless summit, and perchance to rise
¹Once more to spy the heaven, whence he fell;
Tho' vain his art to mount the crystal citadel.

II.

But other forms within this region tread ;
An ancient king yclad in flowery vest,
Cepheus appears, who erst from Libya sped,
What time the Argos with her brazen breast
Stemmed the Propontic ; then his burnished shield
Hung o'er the gilded poop ; now robed with stars
He ceases not his sceptral rod to wield.
When shall his land from men-enslaving wars
Delivered, bend to God the suppliant knee
And change the Moslem rule for Christian liberty ?

III.

Near him Camelopardus browsing lifts
Her lengthened neck and unassuming eye
Athwart the chequer'd firmament, nor shifts
Her station from the chief : a subject she
Wild as her native wilderness, now tamed
* And doing homage to her Libyan lord.
This emblem points us to an æra named
By ancient seers, when quivering spear and sword
No more shall gleam on earth, and e'en the race
Of brutes shall seek to man and claim his fond
caress.

IV.

³ Cassiopæa next augustly rides
Drawn by the Hours in reginal state,
Near to her Lord the illustrious queen resides
Dressed as an Abyssinian potentate ;
A verdurous mantle hides her rosy limbs
Bedropped with gems, a palmy twig she bears
As sceptral rod ; she the alternate hymns,
Cherubic and seraphic duly hears,
Their voices swell and fall ; Ah, sweetly born
Lulled by their symphon chaunt until the days re

V.

She by her charms to hurtful pride was driven
Which brought amercement on her blooming r
Till direful floods her haughty soul abased,
Poured from the skies her sunny meads to wh
Then she no comfort knew, or whence to turn
The rueful vengeance from the drowning field
She wept despairing as the Pagans mourn ;
Nor felt the aid which true religion yields :
But for atonement on the sea-coast bare
She bound her only child, beloved Andromed

VI.

But now that princess all unshackled flings
Her loosened arms athwart the firmament,
And with unlooked for joy elated springs
Holding to view her pendent fetters rent
In twain, tho' still to either guiltless wrist
Fast bound ; 'Twas Perseus in his southern flight
That here delayed, within his inmost breast.
Sore smitten, grieving at the piteous sight
Of such untimely woe ; 'twas his high hand
Which snapped the galling chain, and brake the tor-
turing band.

VII.

He drove his faulchion thro' the scaly hide
Of a fell ranger in the billowy deep,
Whose horrid form had issued from the tide,
Prepared upon his tender prey to leap.
And now Andromeda 'mid clouds serene
With him arises and with him declines,
While still he holds a head of awful mien,
Medusa's, in whose elvy hair entwines
Full many an asp, Medusa foully slain.
E'er yet his winged steed had spurned the Colchian
plain.

VIII.

Amid those larger orbs that silently
Steal o'er the firmamental region where,
Arcturus with his sons unfailingly,
Adorn the robes of Bootes, and near
The purple wing of Virgo may be seen
A cluster dimly twinkling in the haze
⁵ Of distance, named from the Ægyptian Queen,
Who of old time attained this meed of praise,
For that she did her absent spouse bewail
Full bitterly, until she spied his nearing sail.

IX.

She had concealed her ringlets in the shrine
Which Philadelphus for Asinoe
Had built with Grecian marbles, as a sign
Eterne in Paphos, yea for Ptolemy
Did Berenice make this offering ;
But now by honourable name
Immortalized, those tresses glistening
Bear to posterity a lasting fame,
Her votive hairs in heaven's fane are hung
Erst o'er the raging waves by Priests contemptuous
flung.

X.

Observe we next, where thro' the dark air creeps
Lacerta's form with emeralds bestud,
By day within some secret chink he sleeps
Of that Empyreal pave augustly trod ;
This sign reminds us that Jehovah's care
Down from the greatest to the least extends :
That creatures mean do His observance share,
Yea to the smallest His attention bends ;
And that of men, the lowest tribes may come
And taste the streams of life within a deathless home.

XI.

And other signs will greet us if we gaze
By night, beside the wild and storm clad sea,
Standing on Bergen's coast, the rocky maze
Of Nature's ruined barrier, as the spray
Bursts from the angry water ; should we turn
And upward muse upon the ordered calm
Of Heaven ; wide the contrast ! gently burn
The culminating stars, a dewy balm
Distilling, where we mark the Cygnean train
And Lyra's yellow harp held o'er the seething main.

XII.

From the Horizon to the Zenith height,
Their pinions laced with glittering feathers rise,
And up the Lactean way in arduous flight
Contend they, as for agonistic prize ;
The goal attained, the peerless Eagle spreads
His fan, and plunges into downward space,
Outstripping all, he neither fears nor heeds
Their vain assay in the unequal race ;
Thus, O my soul, may thy desires cleave
A pathway to the skies, and vain seducements leave.

XIII.

In thought I stood on the Quirinal hill
In reverie, what time in dreamy sleep
The haunts of men were tranquillised and still,
And from the summit of that ancient steep
Beheld the relics of the ages gone
By Luna's crescent lit ; when not a sound
Stole through the antique region save a moan
Of wailing winds ; then from the shade profound
Arose like spectres from the ghastly tomb
Diverse in size and shape, the hoary pomp of Rome.

XIV.

Not far in front the pale columnial pile
Of Jupiter amidst the ransacked grave
Of ruin stood, of all the peristyle
Three pillars spared, the nodding architrave
Scarcely sustained; deserted and alone
Her adyta laid bare and disenshrined
Fortuna gleamed with Lichens green o'ergrown;
While nearly hidden in the gloom behind,
The arch outpeered to dread Severus given,
Despoiled, for from its cope the prancing steeds were
 riven.

XV.

Ah Caracalla, it was thine to rase
A Father's trophy from that lordly front,
Dishonour foul, profanely to efface
His hard won statues, with the vile intent
Thine own to figure on the pompous roof!
But time's avenging hand hath laid thee low,
Crushed by the foot of man and brutal hoof,
What traveller views thy gilded emblems now?
Branded with lasting infamy, that name
Lives in historic page to wear a deathless shame.

XVI.

Then did I mark, that numerous churches o'er
The remnant of the ancient Curia rose ;
Santa Maria and San Theodore,
E'en where the vestals sleep in long repose,
Santo Lorenzo standing on the pave
Of that Corinthian fane of old assigned
To Antoninus, and the frescoed nave
Of Damiano carefully combined
With what remained of Remo's rounded shrine,
Wrought when the favoured realm beheld her
Constantine.

XVII.

From hence I turned where on the reverend brow
Of a time-furrowed pile, the lunar ray
Reclined, reminding with a golden glow
The mouldering frieze and pillars of the day
Of Triumph, when returned from Judah's war
Titus with all his long procession passed
Beneath that archway in his glittering car,
And o'er his train unrivalled glory cast,
Whilst Rome the sacrilegious spoil conveyed
And Salem's holy store within her temple laid.

XVIII.

Of ample size above the Cœlian mount
The Coliseum rose, as if to mock
Encroaching years, hard by a ruined fount
Stretching its pitchy shade. Had not the shock
Of civil tumult laid thee desolate,
Those tiers unscathed had seen the end of time ;
But now the yellow moss encrusts the seat
Of Senator and Ædile, the faint chime
Of tinkling bell invites to mass and prayer,
Where erst the gladiator's shout, the Lion's roar.

XIX.

Yea, and the basilisks are sunk which stood
On this famed spot, and clothed the Palatine,
Their myriad columns are diversely strewed
'Mid laurel shades and groves of eglantine,
Here a medallion of Arcadia lies
Neglected, there a long and marble frieze
And fluted shafts beneath the ruby skies
Pay to the fallen great their obsequies ;
Yea, and among the heaps, the acanthus wild
Bends o'er a capital defaced and owns her lovely child.

XX.

And scarce the capitol retains a trace
Of Pagan shrines, where erst the gathering crow
Saw on this high and consecrated place
A stony forest to their countless gods.
And broken aqueducts their courses stride
Upon the sombre plain, and stretch the scene
Of desolation, while their scanty tide
Reluctant spills upon the rocks between
The city and surrounding mountains ; whence
Of old they entered Rome in arched magnificenc

XXI.

And as I thus reviewed the ages past,
A filmy cloud withdrew, which e'erwhile flung
A veil o'er Cynthia, who now recast
Her looks abroad, and once more gently hung
Her lamp in sight of palaces and tombs ;
So that adown the vale of Aventine
I kenned uncovered thrones and catacombs.
Of empire ; and Tiber's silvery line
Relumined, glistened in the casual beam,
Where Ponte Vaticano checks the rippling strear

XXII.

Upon the right above its trembling wave
Arose the Cenotaph of Adrian,
At once a papal fortress and a grave ;
But time had reft its marbles Parian,
And where the apple of the mourning pine
Erst gleamed in sombre bronze, the pointed wing
Of an ascending cherubim did shine,
As if preparing from its roof to spring ;
A direful message from the earth should she
Have borne, that Rome was steeped in fearful heresy.

XXIII.

And had I lingered till returning morn
Had tinged the rosy dews upon the crest
Of Apenine, or tipped the velvet lawn
Bounding their steep ascent ; then had the rest
Of Roman pomp appeared ; the Pantheon
Had reared its lofty portico and dome ;
Wherein the images of saints stand on
The pediments of Jove and Juno, and their room
Reoccupy ; while on mosaic floor
The votaries approach and idol shrines adore.

XXIV.

At length full satiate with the contemplation
Of things on earth impure and mutable,
I turned to those whose high æthereal station
Seemed to adjoin to realms immoveable,
How strangely wide the contrast, ruins there
Are none, the forms eternally the same
Of constellations, vary not or dare
Effringe the laws of order ; 'tis a theme
Replete with matter for high-reaching thought,
Their signs in silence speak, with solemn myster
fraught.

XXV.

⁶ There potent Hercules still dares to wield
A club against his enemy ; and fills
An ample space in that celestial field :
The Lion's monstrous voice no longer thrills
Thro' the Nemæan groves ; the sinuous snake
Crushed in his mighty grasp, no more infests
The slimy border of the Lernean lake.
Thus soars the slaughterer of Grecian pests,
A lasting monument of toil and war,
Bearing his sturdy front emblazon'd with a star.

XXVI.

Offspring was he of legendary song,
Of legends from their first intent abused,
What time those clear primeval streams among,
The turbid rills of fiction were infused,
Soiling the holy voices which the shell
Of hymning prophets had outpoured, the plan
Proclaiming, of release from endless Hell,
And showing how that Deity to man
Allied, should bruise the ancient Serpent's power,
And crush his venom'd head, insatiate to devour.

XXVII.

And when the Lord of Lords aggrieved, no more
His chosen seers in pagan realms inspired,
Unheard of gods usurped the shrines of yore
To Him assigned, and wantonly attired
Seduced the worshippers; but lo 'tis thine
O Christian, 'neath that fine-spun covering,
To trace a fresh truth's lineaments divine,
And from their paynim tales dishonouring
To heaven's glory, and profanely wrought,
To rend the attractive veil of too luxuriant thought.

XXVIII.

And in those towering stars by Poets named
Wisdom to read, and from their Hercules
For valiant deeds and high achievements famed,
Disparting legendary lore, to seize
A thought of Him who shall the fiend o'erthrow,
The serpentine destroyer of our race,
The spiritual Dragon ; and undo
His direful wreaths : who shall at length erase
The signs of misery from a sin-stained earth,
Ordained to breathe again, and live in second birth

XXIX.

Such is the Christian's hope, a refluent glow
Of Wisdom's dawn, of old by sable clouds
Concealed, which hung upon the thoughtful brow,
Of eastern magi, and the motley crowds
Of stoled philosophers that paced the grove
Or portico, full anxious to explore
The Highest Good ; from them the Sun of love,
(The gracious bearer of Jehovah's power)
And life was hidden ; nor did saving beam
Chequer their vale of death or tip the Stygian stream



CANTO IV.

THE SOUTHERN CONSTELLATIONS.

" Which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades,
and the Chambers of the South." Job ix. 9.

I.



S one that traverses the western sea
Beating on Calydon, and down that tide
Floats on his voyage, till delightedly
He skirts the braes of Arran, and her side
In curious figures riven, and surveys
Cantire's bare and strangely varied coast;
Now in a sheltered lock the vessel lies
Becalmed, now high amid the billows tost,
The thin mast quivers like a fairy wand,
Poised o'er the briny deep in Ocean's giant hand.

II.

He hears the blast from bleak Colonsa blow,
Dark with the fury of unnumbered storms,
About her cliff the bounding waters throw
Their suppliant arms ; while light and frothy forms
Of gathered spray skim o'er the tide, and drive
Across the gulf of Coryvreka ; where,
Despite the gales that with the current strive,
Should he resolve, and leaving Scarba steer
To Ulva's bay, and mount her velvet hills,
An islet covered sea at once his vision fills.

III.

Thus would I speed upon the mystic blue,
The high wrought firmament, from isle to isle
Flee on the lyric wing, at each renew
My voyage, lingering at each awhile,
And O blest Spirit on my course aspire,
Grant me the lip angelical, of Cherubim
The love, the zeal of that celestial Quire,
Who tell the praises of Jehovah, and to Him
Tune constantly, who spans the wondrous whole,
And bids each wave of time in dread succession rol

IV.

In yon remote pavilions of the south,
Whose ebon curtains shade the frozen plain
For six long moons, efflote in endless youth
'Apus and Xiphias despite the reign
Of winter, and dispense the gladsome beams
Of chequered light in semblance of the day ;
From thence derived, some soul-entrancing dreams
Perchance, in distant realms, the heart may stay,
By memory given of those eyes which far
Reft from the bliss of converse, greet the mutual star.

V.

Reflected in the surface of the deep
Changed to a glassy mirror, by the cold
Of that fell region, as in calmest sleep
Embosom'd, hush'd in Ocean's icy fold,
Like diamonds set in sapphire pave, we trace
The constellations of the nadir pole,
In concentrated splendour to the face
Of Heaven presented, as they ceaseless roll
Fixed sun, and planet, and the hazy sheen
'Of nebulae remote, the myriad worlds unseen.

VI.

And oh ambassadors for Christ, your heart
Uplift with joy, as yonder Host appears
By Him suspended, who shall straight impart
To each his guerdon, with these ranks He che
' His servants to their work, and charity ;
And ye who cruise among the coral isles
Of the Pacific, and the dotted sea
With white sails cover, note ye, observe those si
Translucent of the heavens, as ye bear
The tidings of the Cross, to ruined sinners de

VII.

See it outfigured in selected stars
Bringing effulgence oer the dusky land
Of Æthiop ; as from Océanus it rears
A shape astounding, and the sleeping sand
Reanimates ; to us the welcome sign
Of sins remitted and salvation free.
This constellation doth the sun outshine
In spiritual lustre, and to me
Repeats the Christian covenant in a strain
Sublime of Calvary's hill, and our Redeemer's

VIII.

Oh it is well to have the soul entranced
With such like meditations, and to find
The value of things visible enhanced
By using them, to aid the wand'ring mind
With reminiscences of truth, to read
Instruction in the tomes of nature, and to scan
For wisdom the illuminated volume spread
On high, full open to the search of man,
Penned by the hand of God, tis well to raise
Chants of sweet toned note, from every theme of
praise.

IX.

Another emblem also, meets the eye
Of those who dedicate the wings of thought
To pure devotion, and with reverence pry
Into that bending scroll with mystery fraught,
An altar strikes us, lo the fitful glare
Ascends of lambent flame about a sacrifice
Well nigh consumed, this doth again declare
The world's atonement, and the costly price
Of man's deliverance from judicial ire,
Paid to the law's demand, in agonizing fire.

X.

The wreaths of vapour curl, and wave on high
With streaks immingled to the distant throne
Of the Eternal, and to us convey
A semblance of the holy incense shown
Within the temple, when the Arch Priest held
The censer, and an aromatic cloud
Educed from costly drug, sweet dew distilled ;
Which did the ark and mercy seat enshroud.
But scents more fragrant load the sainted air,
Where in celestial courts, ascends the Saviour's
prayer.

XI.

Athwart the arched ceiling of the South,
Another sign proclaimeth heaven's love,
Bearing the olive in her taper mouth,
Sweeps to the westward Noah's returning Dove,
In her ensilvered form the Spirit's flight
See we depicted, as full wide He spreads
His sanatory pinion to alight
Upon the Church's ark, and meekly sheds
Amid the angry billows hope of bliss,
Bringing the seal of God's eternal faithfulness.

XII.

Yea, and this figure tells us of the bird,
Whose bright wing hovered over Jordan's wave,
As Jesus from those limpid waters reared
His form august; what time the Baptist gave
The sacramental graces needed not;
She soared, as if the essence of that flood,
Emblem of purity without a spot
Of evil intermingled; and abode
With wing extended, o'er that head divine
Proof of his ghostly call, and godly origin.

XIII.

Again, to cheer the christian pilgrim through
This darksome vale, another sign is shown
Of Hope assured, inviolably true,
The Resurrection; on a blazing throne
The Bird of Araby is seen, but not the glare
Of her consuming nest distraction brings
To her undaunted breast, she sheds no tear
In dissolution, but dissolving sings,
While from her ashes there serenely flies
A Phœnix ready plumed to meet the amber skies.

XIV.

Hail Resurrection ! thou the brightest gem
Of all that glisten on the golden zone
Clasping the flowing robe, and vest of Him,
Who as the Church's Hierarch is gone
Hence to confirm the last and crowning gift.
Thrice blessed expectation of the dead !
Already has the Head of those that slept
Felt thy all changing influence, and sped
To Heaven. Lo ! the emblem we embrace
Framed in glowing stars whose living steps we trac

XV.

Nor may those Coronets less hope inspire,
Impearled with stars, the one exalted near
The club of Bootes, whose knots of fire
Baffle the night, the northern hemisphere
Illumining, the other lower fixed,
And dimly visible; thus stand revealed
The shadows of the realm, where Truth unmixed
With aught of darkness, is for aye unveiled,
The guerdon yet to come, we faintly view
The Diadems reserved, enduring Saints, for you.

XVI.

Nor should we pass the Triangles, or shun
Those mystic figures erst in *Ægypt* taught
With artful secrecy, and scarce among
The cells of Isis known, which Mizraim brought
An Oriental relic of the truth.
'And Hermes carved on the columnial stone,
Describing the Eternal God in sooth,
And His plurality unite in one,
Dimly outshewing under Angles Trine,
Wisdom and Thought combined with Energy divine.

XVII.

Further proceeding o'er the distant bend
Of the enamelled firmament, along
The Lactæan channel as our musings wend,
Meet we an ancient figure yet unsung,
Biformed Centaurus with a ravening foe
Contendant; say! how shall our strain divest
The pagan theme, and from remembrance throw
The fable, that our weary souls may rest
In truth, and gather from the sign Equestrian,
Thoughts more sublime august and Christian?

XVIII.

Fain would we dwell on that unequalled scene
In Patmos to the banished seer revealed,
When o'er the craggy isle the cloudy screen
Was riven, and within the lucid field
Caparisoned, appeared a snow white steed,
And on it sat the Holy One and True
Judging and making war, upon His head
Rose many crowns, His dreadful eyeball threw
Abroad the vivid flame, His robe of blood
Announced to all beholders This “The Word of
God.”

XIX.

Behind their chief a long procession rode
On pallid steeds, arrayed in silvery dress,
As rueful vengeance to the foes of God
His panoply and visage did express,
For from His lip a sharp edged weapon sprung,
Furbished for death, and glaring terribly,
Stretched as an angry sceptre o'er the throng
Of nations, while impressed upon His thigh
This honorable title gleamed in words
Widely resplendent, “ King of Kings and Lord of
Lords.”

XX.

Thus thro' the southern stars in part I've roved,
In meditation wrapt, seeking in all
To find Thee and to bless Thee O beloved,
For this on gales of song the earthly ball
I left, and struggling thro' the doubtful maze
Of fable hoped to touch the pensile hem
Of Truth's fair vestment; or perchance to gaze
On some far world, which neither guilt nor shame
Hath entered, that its purer sheen might throw
O'er my affections wan a rich and holier glow.



CANTO V.

THE SOUTHERN CONSTELLATIONS
CONTINUED, WITH THE MIDDLE
GROUPS.

*“Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or
guide Arcturus with his sons?” Job xxxviii. 31.*

I.

ROUSE Polyhymnia ! thou hast yet untried
The spacious purlieus of that forest, filled
With bands innumEROUS, of those who hunt
In coverts dense, or gorge their booty killed
In chase, or those of nimble foot to fly
Before the eager huntsman and the bay
Of ranging dogs ; where erst the wily boy
Shot forth his volant arrow at the prey ;
Such sights and deeds within the arching glade
Are shown by boding stars in various postures !

II.

O'er the Antarctic Pavo's plume unfolds
Empurpled eyes to heaven : the wild Crane
Divides the liquid atmosphere, and holds
A course direct across the polar main.
In shivering waves the speckled Hydra winds,
Cetus disports, within the azure gloom
The Dolphin bounds, the wandering Indian binds
His painted darts, and various objects roam
As in the north so in the austral sphere
Which neither wily nets or cruel javelin fear.

III.

Nor is the sly Cameleon from our gaze
Concealed, who surreptitiously and slow
Doth ape humility ; how well he plays
The subtle hypocrite ! 'tis hard to know
Those who like him will feign the smooth address
To court the notice of the gay and great,
And wear the painted smile, how few would guess
These men the same who in their own retreat
Are churlish, proud, or like hyænas grim,
The very fiends at home abroad as angels seem.

IV.

Leaving this circle, towards a barrier
We turn of stretching sand, which never drinks
Or rain or dew, whereon the ardent star
Of Sirius gleams, upon whose rising shrinks
The very wilderness, and see effixed
Within a distant creek, the fancied beak
¹Of Argo borne from waves aerial, vexed [bre
With light and shadowy oars, those waves wh
Their crests on that imaginary shore,
Where never Tempests rage or cruel surges roa

V.

She sped, where still the wooded banks between
The silver Bosphorus flows, where Marmora
Unfolds her dazzling bosom, and the Queen
Of Orient Europe dwells ; stern Galata
Crown'd with its mouldering walls of mossy gre
Stands from its brink, nor then did Minaret,
O'ertop the grove of cypress, or the plane
Enshroud the Kiosk dome, nor had as yet
The palaces of Pera climb the mounds,
At whose encurved base the busy port resounds

VI.

Thence did she run, to cut with frequent oar
The Euxine billows, whose tumultuous peal
Thundered and rang upon the parting shore,
But these were dashed before the Argive keel,
Boiling indignantly; a broad expanse
Now opened fair, wherein Aurora sees
Her brow still painted, as from out the trance
Of night she wakes, to meet the new-born breeze;
That wished for aid, which fanned the labouring crew
Whilst o'er the roseate waves to Orphic lute they
flew.

VII.

Full fifty shields along her bending side
Allured the purple of the rising day,
As Typhys, steering to the east, did guide
His weighty charge, and Jason to obey
Each ruler bent. Bright Atalanta there
Clothed in heroic armour might be seen,
Loved child of Schoeneus, her imprisoned hair
Unmasking all her features feminine,
But most the rounded arm and gentle hand
Show'd who had lent her aid to reach the Colchian
strand.

VIII.

Uplifted lo, the Argo in the blue
Serene of heaven floateth, and the rock
Defies which 'neath the feigning mirror threw
Its deadly arm; her floating pennons mock
The mundane blast; thus sure and blest are they
Whose bark above these regions visible
Hath anchor'd firm, who from the Siren's lay
Escaped and made thro' grace invincible,
Have passed the struggling billows of the grave,
Reaching the floral shore, Elysian waters lave.

IX.

Hard by the trunk to which the Argo binds
Her cable where impetuous eddies rush
To kiss the waves, the nightly watcher finds
An ancient Oak pourtrayed, whose acorns push
Their frequent heads the quivering leaves 'twixt,
This Phasian stream denotes a river pure
Gliding thro' Paradise, near which is fixed
The spacious grove which shall for aye endure,
Beneath whose fruitful and ambrosial shade,
Saints from the stormy world have debarkation made

X.

ied from the mystic Tree mine eyes did soar
ard the middle arch, whence gently broke
in sulphureous mist which heretofore
veiled the gorgeous sight, and straight awoke
yriad objects bright as in a dream
ancy's birth which like a pageant passed;
erse and multiform, and thence a stream
soft light issued as their figures vast
ose and dun stellated forms displayed;
le thro' Savannahs wide, or gloomy glen they
strayed.

XI.

t I perceived the grisly Bear pursued
clamorous Bootes, whose cry set on
t footed dogs to chase them thro' the wood,
pled in silken bands, Asterion
l Chara, these another dangerous foe
unwhile provoked, who sprung and took the lead
light, a spotted Lynx; while far below
osky lair a youthful Lion preyed
n his ravin, whose red flowing mane
stream with golden stars on the meridian.

XII.

Auriga listened to such loud alarms,
Within the howling woodland, and the sound
Of rushing beasts ; then clasping in his arms
The Goat and Kid he leapt upon the ground,
Leaving his chariot, for his horses bands
Were broken from the yoke, he held alone
The champed bit and bridle in his hands ;
Thus watched He, until the grateful boon
Returning Day abroad her glances threw,
Then with retreating dusk his nightly tremors fle

XIII.

Not otherwise the Christian when opprest
With wild unruly passion, still essays
To flee from evil, and that ravening beast
From hell the soul's devourer, and tries
Each art to miss his cunning, and to stand
Aloof from all his efforts ; but in vain ;
Doomed to confront temptation in a land
Where demons perigrate, He grasps the rein
Of patience, and abased upon his knees,
Waits till the smiling streak of Heaven's dawn he se

XIV.

And as this vision passed, my mind could clothe
New groups in forms of fancy as they came
Successive to their zenith, tho' in sooth
Imagination their completed frame
Alone could furnish. Grasping a speckled snake
Huge Serpentarius, amid the gloom
Now brightly shone, and close behind a brake
Of thorns protected, to his earthy home
Vulpecula conveyed his feathered prey,
Shunning the barbed steel that whistled fiercely by;

XV.

Antinous the glancing weapon sent
Missing his aim, and next at Lepus hid
In spiral fern, the threatening bow is bent,
Where bayed the shrill Canicula and tried
To spring his game, meanwhile in eager race
Contendant, rushed across the azure plain
Equiculus by the excelling pace
Of Pegasus pursued, who erst had been
The steed of Perseus, when the wondering air
He clave in rampant flight to save Andromeda.

XVI.

Monosceros the last of this fleet train
Next darted to the goal, as if to catch
His rivals, without bit or curbing rein ;
But scarce could he the cope of heaven reach
E'er yet the rest upon the fading line
Of the horizon touched, whence they descried
Far other plains and other hills to shine
Basking in midday lustre, and arrayed
With forests vast and rivers' sparkling sheen
Winding their devious track the silver trees atween

XVII.

Such objects ope to one on Jura standing,
Progressing to the warrior-trodden plain
Of Italy ; on that ridge commanding
The boundless Alp and valley of Lausanne,
The pilgrim rests ; and as he doth survey
God's glorious works, each stricken fibre thrills
Wildly with sweet unwonted ecstasy ;
He finds relief in praise, like rapture fills
The sainted spirits, who these regions leave ;
What time their virgin eyes Elysium perceive.

XVIII.

But these were not Helvetia's tops I ween
For them deploying ; 'twas the piny zone
That skirts Mantinea's empurpled plain ;
On whose bleak summits Bootes alone
Remained. Tegæa 'neath these mountains lay
Concealed from those who round the graceful bend
Of the Tyrrinthian gulf to Lerna stray.
Illustrious land that did so frequent send
Forth from its teeming clime the great, the brave,
'Nurse of the bard and sage, but Philopœmen's grave !'

XIX.

And Mænalus appeared, from whose grey head
And turfè side, the shepherd's bleating bands
At midday slowly wander, to the bed
Of rivulet unseen ; while towering stands
Upon each beetling crag the horned deer,
Snuffing the dell beneath ; how dimly melt
Those slight fantastic summits in the rear,
Rough Erymanthus in the clouds engilt,
Whose hyacinthine shades will distance thin
From Sol's meridian heat the Pylian valley screen !

XX.

Yon frowning Castle on the opposing slope
Stern with the thought of martial ages gone
Is mutely eloquent, that stately group
Of fluted columns scorn the trophies won
By Truth's advance; the simple shepherds stray,
Unhonored sons of Inachus, and guide
Their flock where'neath some wide embowering tree
They may enjoy repose, or by the side
Of whispering waters sit, while echoes sweet
To each Gortynian rock, Idyllia repeat.

XXI.

Perchance their offspring on the floral mead
To mirthful measures trip, or round the palm
Their hands unite, from every graceful brow
The garland droops, the evening's dewy balm
Softly distils; homeward the elder son
Wends from his labour to the jocund spot,
Weary yet blithe; his eager sisters run
To spread his simple meal, then soon forgot
The day's long toil, he lends his vocal aid
To swell the vesper hymn along the sylvan glade.

XXII.

No need of Nymph or graceful Oread here,
Raphael or Rosa would have loved to see
This Grecian band unawed by Moslem fear
Blending in unison with festal glee,
And they had marked a form in silence sitting,
Tending the chaplets on the taper neck
Of a sleek fawn ; beloved employ befitting
Beauty and peace, it was her joy to deck
Her charge at morn with flowers, and at eve
The withered braid to loose, the fillet to unweave.

XXIII.

But was their toil or leisure pastoral,
Void of each biting care or anxious thought ?
Answer thou world of joys ephemeral,
“ Mortal ! it never was thy destined lot,
On sin-mixed soil, pure pleasure to inherit,
Nor may it be, till all the earth is clad
In newborn radiance by the Eternal Spirit,
With Eden’s bloom o’er all its regions spread,
From north to south, with grace exceeding far
Thy Rocks thy sylvan dell, oak-wreathed Arcadia.”



CANTO VI. CONCLUDING VISION.

"The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work.

"Day unto day utterereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.

"There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard.

"Their line (or vibration and harmony) is gone out thro' all the earth, and their words to the end of the world."

PSALM xix. 1, 2, 3, 4.

I.



ND as I watched these movements, sweet
repose [newed
Drowned all my weary sense, by which re-
My soul again to wakeful rapture rose ;
And images of form unearthly viewed
In 'mid air floating, not removed so far,
But that each change of feature delicate
Each slight expression was depicted clear,
From smile of force to win or fascinate
To look severe ; thus in the green sea wave
The hues of earth and sky a bright resemblance leave.

II.

And thus do vivid colours in the face
Of calm Geneva's mirror lie revealed ;
On summer's eve, what time we love to trace
The hoary mass of sovereign Blanc unveiled
Raising his head stupendous, as the sire
Of the gigantic sons that round him stand,
Leader of all that deep resounding quire,
Whose voices lull, save when the dreadful band
To animate, the chieftain, 'gins to launch
Down from its towering base, the bounding Ava-
lanche.

III.

'Tis so, when from Biasca we descend
And sweep with oars thy long umbrageous lake
Logorno ; where the living waters wend
Among the vine-clad hills and borrowing take
Their every tint ; the landscape is the same
Reversed within the mocking element,
But softer still : thus to the bardic dream
Elysian prospects were benignly lent,
Bedimmed and suited to the mental view,
Part of the heavens' pure and gracious retinue.

IV.

' Within the starry dome there seemed to droop
A purple canopy ; and undefined
Ideal lights quick moving, showed a group
Of sylph-like figures by the fitful wind
Upborne : the calm and lofty mien of each
Evinced unearthly birth, nor was it hard
To gather, tho' as yet unheard their speech,
That these were none of the angelic guard,
But Virtues sent to aid my mortal eyes,
With profit to peruse the nightly mysteries.

V.

The names imprinted on their front were these,
Divine Love, Truth, Unswerving Charity,
Faith, Justice, Purity and Gentleness,
Wisdom and Humbleness, 'twas good to be
Methought with such associates ; still more
To hear how severally the holy Nine
Did to my heart benignantly outpour,
As from a precious and exhaustless mine,
Their lucid thoughts of good and ill below,
Which as they passed to me, I will in order show.

VI.

First, Love unfurled her pinions and her tongue
Dropped speech mellifluous, “ O man survey,”
Quoth she, “ the marts of Christendom, the throng
Of those whose worship and religion say
We are devote to God, the world and sin
Have been renounced, with Church’s holy dew
We are baptized: then say, what is that scene
Of gilded revelry, where not a few
Are quaffing pleasures in the midnight glare
Of the voluptuous waltz, or godless Opera ?

VII.

?“ These are deceived, for know the love of God
Glows not in such unsainted atmosphere :
Turn from that vortex, fashion’s choice abode
To those with whom the simpler joys are dear,
From gaiety remote, to some lone spot
Or rustic hamlet on the mountain side,
Where the meek peasant in his humble cot
Collects his family at eventide,
And from the holy book as Christian sire,
Leads forth the word of God, or leads the homely
quire.

VIII.

“ Oft do their minds the virtues emulate,
That glisten purely in the nightly spheres,
Yea those which on our zenith culminate,
The very flame of rapture which appears
In them imbibing, they will lightly soar
With lofty thought above the sullied joy
Of earth ; O learn of them to thirst no more
For empty pleasures : Let thy whole employ
Of life be sanctified, then pallid fear
Shall quit thy cloudless heart for her own region
drear.”

IX.

Truth next advanced, the Spirit’s elder child,
Essential attribute of Deity.
No filmy veil obscured her aspect mild,
Radiant her brow, as when on ashen tree
Glowing with autumn gold, the ruddier hue
Of vesper falls, and cheers the drooping soul
Of palmer from the forest’s dark purlieu
Emerging : down upon the leafy knoll
He sinks and welcomes rest ; so lustrous came
Truth to the Poet’s ken, and unsubstantial dream.

X.

y Son, she said, attend me, and with care
struction gather from these tutored lips ;
e worldly mind is taken with the glare
unsalubrious weeds, and never reaps
iety from thence : my bloom, alas,
its divine and virgin purity,
tall competitors out grown, is scarce
ceptible ; The noble theory
d practice of my law is but by few
aceited of, O would that all my treasured good-
ness knew.

XI.

ow that the laws of nature and God's writ
fully join and duly harmonize
teach One Sovereign Lord supreme and great
Father kind, and infinitely wise,
sooth the liquid air, the clouds, the sea,
starry host, the beetling mountain wild,
h holy Scripture form one library.
nding in unison, to show the child
heaven pathways of concurrent truth,
well with reverend care to search the page of
both.

XII.

The trees of every stem, or leaf, or fruit,
Whether in bosk or forest, or beside
The purling brooks, from whence the gnarled r
Draws life by slender fibres unespied,
Are oft in Scripture used to portray
The mystic church with various graces crowne^d
And fostering time will prove how blest are th
Among the trees of God's plantation owned
Who to the holy flood contiguous,
Have felt the spirit's tide, and waves irriguous.

XIII.

Yon caverned rock denotes the still retreat
Of saints within the shelter of their God;
The firmly grounded hills delineate
His strength and faithfulness, the mantling so
Upon their ample sides, the transient age
Of man, his brevity and feebleness;
The clouds which on their distant embassage
Air-winged, sail across the vividness
Of eve, are like angelic squadrons sent
To some remoter world, an awful pageant.

XIV.

stronger proofs of Nature's harmony
unity with Scripture traceable
In her laws, we yet more clearly see
In yonder flaming lights observable,
In the dark concave, for these accord
In Revelation fully, and transmit
Unalloyed effulgence o'er the word ;
They themselves, are notes of wisdom writ
Man, a comment by the matchless pen
Heaven traced, whose lines I will to thee explain.

XV.

A new born moon, her points so ashy pale,
Ingeth to argent with the fall of day ;
I now with bow of amber at the mail
Sol she hurls her faint artillery ;
As in sport, emits a fiercer glow
On her mottled sides ; and thence her hue
Ghthens to jacinth, as the shadows grow
Ensor still, and weeps the pearly dew :
Sheen of gold at length the monarch yields,
Ghth are the magic hills and warm the lucid fields.

xvi.

Thus let the Church the glory contemplate
The sun-like beauties of her absent King,
Then will He cast his rays inviolate
On her, to joy and animation bring
The fading cheek : and if more eager still
She seek His grace, and mournful Calvary
Attract her thought, and Tabor's hill
Or Olivet, then will her melting eye
Drink deeper bliss, and should she yet pursue
His course to Heaven, o'er her form the bridal vest
shall flow.

xvii.

The fulness of his love thus seek to know,
His purpose toward the Gentiles ere the world
Was fully peopled, which the Syrian did discern,
What time o'er Palestine the night unfurled
Its banner, and the great Jehovah said,
Behold the arching heavens and recount
The number of the stars if thou canst read
Their myriads, for such is the amount
Of thy predestined race, yea like to them
Shall be hereafter in renown the seed of Abraham.

XVIII.

Again, the Church's form and symmetry
the convolving planets are displayed;
the Sun, the centre and depositary
of life and heat, with vigorous light arrayed
with a garment, doth outfigure Him
who from an unexhaustive fountain pours
ceaseless torrent and perennial stream
of spiritual goodness, and outsoars
kingly might, the supra mundane thrones,
as His essential beams eclipse the holy ones.

XIX.

the planets in their circuits represent
the Bishops of the Church in every age,
whom some round their Lord did circumvent
courses near, and some their embassage
periods more remote did execute:
those of the later centuries more like
the famed star of Herschel convolute,
at upon all His beams of glory strike,
th no remoteness is of force to dim
the promise, "I am with thee to the end of time."

xx.

The Priests and deacons like their moons awai
Upon their rulers, and with them conjoined
Among the stars and o'er the dusky night
Direct the beams of truth, for God hath shined
On all these island orbs, as one who loves
Order and due gradation, and for man
He hath prescribed the same, which doubly pr
Our duty to conserve the matchless plan,
Our wisdom to revere this polity
Ordained to keep the Church from wildest anarc

xxi.

The Hosts which so majestically scale
The glittering vault, what time yon drooping su
Hath left the heavens languishing and pale,
Lie at the basement of the eternal throne,
Besetting it around with torches infinite :
Thus are the myriads of the just, among
The Gentiles situate, emitting light
Seraphic through the world not yet a throng
Collective, but dispersed, to bear abroad
The Spirit's lamp of life, the Saviour's winning wo

xxii.

She said, and straightway in a rosy mist
Envolved, to an airy chariot
Upborne, evanished the Uranian guest :
Scarce had she flown, when in the sky, from out
The fissures of a long depending cloud,
Whose drooping skirts did sweep the mountain side,
A second chariot gleamed, in which there stood
A form beloved in heaven, who beside
Her God abides ; save when on errand sent,
The wretched she attends, with comforts lenient.

xxiii.

Atween her auburn locks and open brow
A star like Hesperus lay ; a topaz stone
Clasping her vest, increased its orient glow,
Auriferous she sped, and lighted on
The obsequious earth, which in obeisance oped
Her stores prolific, and in reverence threw
A carpeting of flowerets all ungrouped,
Harebell and wild anemony, that grew
Spontaneous, at her feet : thus greeted she
With calm and sunny air, bespoke in accents free.

XXIV.

Observe the ætherial harmonies, no breach
Of love's pure law can be detected there :
Thus to the Christian Church doth ever preach
Order and unanimity ; no war
Is there perceived of sentiments to oppose
Love's primal peace, no hot and baneful strife
Orb against orb, disturbs the still repose
Of those interminable regions, rife
With amity ; O say, when yet again
We shall perceive on earth this saintly regimen ?

XXV.

She said, and lightly touched the flowing rein
Mounting her seat, on which the chariot rose
Upborne by nimble steeds which spurned the plain,
And o'er the glazed tops of Alpine snows
Bounding from peak and precipice, the flash
Of her bright wheels evanished, as a cloud
Enclosed them ; while from Heaven's gate a crash
Of solemn thunder echoed, voices loud
And trumpets shrill throughout the empyrean rung,
As sylphs of downy wing full wide the portals flung.

XXVI.

Faith next descended, and a sister band
Of virtues followed, Justice, Purity,
Wisdom and Meekness, leading by the hand
Humility, with large and fervent eye
She conned the cope sidereal, as her form
Shot like a meteor to an eminence
Of rocks high-piled to brave the weltering storm,
Then she bespoke. " Think not the precedence
I claim, because on this commanding peak
I foremost stand, and first the awful silence break.

XXVII.

No, yet my grace infused into the heart
Of erring men from hell's destruction saves,
I am a gift Jehovah doth impart
Most free; in sooth my dauntless virtue braves
Temptation's violence; 'tis like a tree
In spring-tide smiling with a snow-white bloom
In autumn blushing to maturity;
But yet, there is a feigned faith by some
More followed, soon by tempests withered,
Degenerate, from which no fruits are gathered.

XXVIII.

I hold the keys which only can unlock
Divinest mystery, from common sight
Secluded : for no natural eye might brook
Their brilliancy ; I could at large indite
Such truths as would exhaust or quench the flan
Of flickering life, such scenes I could unfold ;
At whose revealing, all thy fleshly frame
Would straight dissolve, devoid of strength to hol
The swift retreating spirit ; wherefore wait
Until a cloudless vision suit thy perfect state.

XXIX.

But let me point to yonder glimmering host ;
Of these the least is alway visible,
Not the remotest to his ken is lost,
Who led by love incomprehensible
Yearning for sinners, as an infant child
Was born, and by his sorrows did atone
For every crime of thought or passions wild
Felt or indulged ; whose agonizing groan
Outsounded all the clamorous demand
Of Justice, and procured for mortals mercy bland

XXX.

Those hands which did outstretch upon the cross
Do nightly raise Orion, and direct
The lively Pleiades, fierce Sirius
They hold, and gloriously erect
To the mid zenith the aspiring train
Of Aquila and Cygnus, that bowed head
Freed from the grave and beautified again,
Is above all their brightness honored ;
The eyes erst sunk in death, do now survey
And rule the countless orbs upon the Lactean Way.

XXXI.

The same my Son, ere yet the world was framed
The fitful changes of thy life foreknew,
Foresaw and loved, ere yet Aurora gleamed
Upon the guiltless earth, ere yet the dew
Impearled the vernal blade ; for then His own
Fair church was numbered for deliverance.
Anticipating grace their course had run
And finished. Hold this doctrine and advance
Ye soul-united bands, while o'er that sea
Of molten gold ye gaze Love's past eternity.

XXXII.

Walk in my steps, nor let forebodings rise
Hurtful to confidence, but still believe,
Cling to that all-atoning sacrifice ;
A trust in Jesus will thy God receive,
In lieu of legal perfectness, be firm,
And to that hope derided oft, yet true,
Commit thy faltering heart : each vain alarm
Neglect, which might a faithless doubt renew,
Gird on thy wings, and on this towering height,
Serene, above the wild and scathing winds alight,

XXXIII.

She spake, and next with countenance severe,
Justice approached, and in her hands displayed
A sword and pendent scales wherein with care
The deeds of heaven and of earth are weighed,
Her eyes were bounden with a 'kerchief o'er,
Lest she might swerve from strictest equity ;
At her approach a harsh commingled roar
Burst from the fallen cliffs and points around,
The forked lightnings rent the tortured sky,
From hidden depths the lurid vapour soared,
Whilome from shivered rocks the yellow lava poured

XXXIV.

Be still ye elements ; from whence this din
Anarchical, as if his weary side
Enceladus did change, will ye begin
To wake the reign of chaos ? Justice cried ;
Then pointing heavenwards, she calmly said ;
Within the jaspar palaces, the seats
Of angels and of saints by them upled,
And all adown the clear crystalline streets,
A starry pave oracular is fixed
Whose voices ye shall hear with melodies immixed.

XXXV.

HYMN.

“ What tho’ more variegated charms are by
“ The lucent hours of the daylight shown ;
“ Yet when dark shades the world’s bewitchery
“ Excludes, and mounted on his ebon throne
“ Night rules, and holy nature redolent
“ With roral fragrancy her censer opes,
“ Oblating dues to heaven, compound scent
“ Of every leaf, the charmed spirit droops
“ No more, but vaulting midway towards her home,
“ Enclasps the sainted light above the midnight
gloom.

XXXVI.

“ Oh how exulting is it then to stand
“ Peering through systems wide and numberless,
“ Whilome huge suns revolve on either hand,
“ Cleaving the raven shades ; lo the abyss
“ Of downward space with life impregnate shines
“ E’en as the upward firmament ; the beam
“ Of day is set, but in those burnished mines,
“ The hidden wealth of other regions gleam ;
“ How populous how infinite that realm,
“ One comprehensive glance would human sense
o’erwhelm !

XXXVII.

“ Say, what efflux of stars deciduous
“ At old creation’s birth from heaven did bound,
“ Dancing adown the heights precipitous,
“ Poured forth from golden urns until they found
“ A station fixed ; say who those Hosts arranged
“ And reckoned them by name ? One God supreme
“ And how should any from His law estranged,
“ Think to prefer their idol gods to Him ?
“ How is it that beneath the star-ceiled fane
“ One rebel should exist, one wilful alien ? ”

XXXVIII.

Justice resumed, this sanctuary around,
Bedecked with lamps, whose atramental dome
And arches rise upon the space profound,
'Enshrouds a medium, where all spirits roam.
Here I perceive a cherub thro' the air
Descending to protect a sleeping child,
Another hovering in suspense to bear
The saint, who dying, greets his aspect mild :
Another bends in prayer, while from his brow
Disparting tresses roll upon a vest of snow.

XXXIX.

And here to your fell detriment and grief
Foul demons prowl ; and in a dusky aisle
Secrete of this vast temple lurks their chief,
Feasting on deeds of ill : a livid smile
Plays on his visage, when at his demand
His legions tell how well the hypocrite
Hath feigned ; or how some soul-consuming brand
Of heresy hath been at length aright
Applied, whose flames did threaten to advance,
Deadened with learned care, the simple to entrance.

XL.

Thus is the mid serene, with life replete,
With Hosts invisible contendant still
For weal or woe of man, sailing on fleet
But noiseless embassage, for good or ill
Traversing field or wave, the chequered floor
Of Heaven. But in sooth wisdom I see
Advancing from the ever-lifted door
Of majesty ; she comes with long array
Of glowing chariots, and steeds that tread
Upon the emerald plain, by white-winged seraphs l

XLI.

Eftsoon I caught her strain. • Would'st thou be w
O man and enter the serenity
Of my retreats ; then let thy spirit rise
On wings of faith and prayer, with purity
Toward Him, who clothed in rays ineffable
Reignest with Godhead, whose mild graces thre
Softness o'er splendours insupportable ;
As the vermillion colours on the brow
Of Styrian Alp in autumn eventide,
Create a filmy veil the torrid beams to hide.

XLII.

And would'st thou more the depths of wisdom prove,
Searching the springs of intellect, thy thought
Embathe in holy mysteries of love ;
Taste the nectarian joy and spare thee not,
Checking all vain desire, then shalt thou view
Mercies their roseate buds unveiling
Adown life's brief and chequered avenue,
And should the earlier wreaths from smiling
Cease, yet anon shall other petals wave,
And cheer thy cautious steps to realms beyond the
grave.

XLIII.

She spake and took her flight aerial,
And as in ambient light her hairs did flote,
Her glistening scarf did with the zephyr swell,
Which wailed and sighed melodiously, methought,
And yet in strain so gentle, that the ear
Could scarce collect its dying harmonies.
But to these cadent tones a volume clear
Of heavier sounds succeeded, symphonies,
Whose rolling chords with lighter airs unmixed,
Did hold my charmed sense in mute attention fixed.

XLIV.

Not long, for other sylph-like figures veiled
In gauze argentine, stayed their blue-veined fe
Upon a mountain mist, whose fringes trailed
Adown a neighbouring crag, impressions sweet
They gave, as holding other by the hand,
They spoke successively, the sisters three
Who thus dispelled the gloom with aspect blan
Were Meekness, Pureness, and Humility,
These found me sitting, wrapt in thoughtful m
Hard by a murmuring brook, within a moonlit w

XLV.

Pureness advanced and uttered, child of sin,
Render henceforth to heaven worthier love,
Terrestrial dalliances do check the wing
Of thy regenerate spirit, hence remove
Thy soiled affections, lo a brighter land
Awaits the justified. View yon array
Of Genii each a red or golden brand
Waving incessantly, these point the way
To realms where streams of clearer lustre flow
Than e'er the vitreous springs of Arethusa thr

XLVI.

now our eyes do witness on your globe
ssing deeds; and all unholiness
cruelly, our gentle senses throb
agitation, nay in bitterness
ieve, at the least sin or slightest breath
l thought: but when foul murder stalks
d to steep his bloody hands in death,
zen lewdness thro' the city walks,
ng loose passion; we are fain to shroud
ances in the veil of some all-shadowing cloud.

XLVII.

ster can announce the souls which roam
umbrageous and unfading bowers;
less replied, yea those in Christendom
elt the Spirit's renovating showers.
those empyrean seats no aspects fierce
nd to earth, from yonder Lactean spheres
t intolerable arrows pierce
arching sight; the heaven-adjoining tiers
wing suns do with benignance shine,
er the concave shed a mildness infantine.

XLVIII.

Theirs is a land from whose unguarded lines
No wreaths of smoke ascend, to mark the posts
Of the invader's camp; down their ravines
No warlike horseman bounds, or laboring hosts
Propel the cannon to the trembling plain.
Their jocund heights of ivy-woven rock
Re-echo not with clarion, or the strain
Of brazen trumpet, as to meet the shock
Of battle, dark battalions thickly set
.Chequer the mountain side with helmets infinite.

XLIX.

The clash of steel they hear not, or the shout
Of chasseur charging on the bristling square.
They witness not the horrid lanes carved out
By fusils showering grape upon the rear
Of swift-retreating bands; their grassy meads
Are never with the latent warriors strewn,
Eager to point before the prancing steeds
The musket's aim. Their fragrant brakes o'ergrown
With floral bines touch not the waving plume,
Of the advanced picquet within its stealthy gloom.

L.

Their celestial dwellings need not for defence
Bastion or glacis, or surmounting tower
Girded with angles keen, that shot may glance
Into the fosse beneath, no bursting shower
Hurled from tempestuous bombs disaster spreads
Among the stately domes; no engines break
The crystal wall: no dusky column treads
Along the trench, a bloody bed to make
Under the sliding breach, where foemen's ire
Trooped on each salient point reserves the mur-
derous fire.

L.I.

No! but the banners on their opal gates
Wave to the songs of praise; their festal courts
Ring with hosannas, and those spacious streets
Are thronged with myriads from serene resorts
Ent'ring the City, delightsome groves
Forsaking; whence the long processions wind
Towards the magnific Capitol, pure loves'
Oblation to express, and tributes unconstrained:
Such are the realms, where not a mist of sadness,
Floats o'er the sunlit tide of their eternal gladness.

LII.

Full like the globes of biggest magnitude
The meekest rule and more illustrious ride,
Far from all threne, and persecution rude,
And as vicegerents of the earth preside.
Their forms are hidden, only ye perceive
Their semblance in the beauteous lights that stray
To Earth, such as, Seginus on the sleeve
Of Bootes, Albico, Asengue,
In Lyra Aldebaran, and the famed star
'Twixt the Bull's horns, Bellatrix, Mirach, Alencar.

LIII.

By me bold Stephen saw the heavens oped
And clothed in living light, the blessed Son ;
At my advance the ancient idols drooped
Their honours, and immortal wreaths were won
By Christ's disciples, e'en the poor and weak
Pressing towards his kingdom thro' the gate
Of bloody death ; by me aged Telemache
The Syrian, travelling from his lone retreat
Of friendly woods, the Olympic game suppressed ;
His very eye empierced the gladiatorial breast.

LIV.

By me Ambrosius at the Temple door
Forbade the Emperor on that pave to tread,
Till he repentance felt and anguish sore,
For the Greek blood his random troops had shed.
By me Elisa in the bloom of age
The Dacian princess, left her royal court
And did in deeds of holiest worth engage,
Her sovereign hands in lowliest labour wrought,
Friend of the friendless poor with poor she dwelt,
Shewing how deep her soul the grace of Jesu felt.

LV.

Mortal, I cease, well nigh the given space
Is spent, of our continuance in sight
Of Earth. The buoyant path I must retrace,
Back to our festal home, for thievish night
Retreats, and far below the horizon dim,
Where Ereb reigneth o'er his ghosts forlorn,
The gay forerunners of the ardent sun
Cloked in grey mists, await the lingering morn,
Let but three footsteps of old Time advance,
And on the mountain ridge the fiery coursers prance.

LVI.

Yet hear our sister, ere this very watch
Be spent, ere yet the sleep destroying cock
The clamorous sentinel, the announcement catch
Of Time's new birth, and ere the abbey clock
Chimes forth its solemn note and boometh one;
For then surmounting on the yielding air
We must impress our pinions and be gone.
At length Humility's soft form drew near,
Among the whispering trees her station took,
And straightway to my ear in solemn accent spoke.

LVII.

Frail man, how is it that thy towering mind
To cope with godly might doth e'er presume ?
How is it that thy reason is so blind
As not to judge that transient is the bloom
Of human praise ? wilt thou for this despise
The gracious approbation of thy God,
Or vaunt as if thy future destinies
On Him depended not, when yon green sod
Shall soon o'er thy mortality be strown,
Pressed round the weeping urn or monumental stone ?

LVIII.

O duly estimate thyself; reflect
On that example of humility
By Jesu shown, see that thy intellect
Bearing the impress of divinity
Exalt thee not, lest it be doomed to serve
In folly's yoke and pride's inglorious chain.
A lowly spirit only can observe
Aright the wisdom of Jehovah, and attain
To comprehend His saving verities,
And she alone to learn truth's deepest mysteries.

LIX.

Con once again those puissant orbs and note
Their sailing o'er the concave, for they teach
This axiom. The living forms that float
In the cærulean Zenith did not reach
That altitude, but by a gradual roll ;
Nor climb so high, till they had dipped beneath
The lowliest distance of the nadir pole ;
And thus if thou would'st gain the palmy wreath
Of honour in Christ's kingdom, meekly bow,
And bear His tender yoke the livelong journey
through.

LX.

Vainly do princes of their prowess boast,
Dukes of their wide demesnes and seignories,
Burghers of hard-earned gain, their wealth is lost
In nothingness when meted with the skies.
The globe itself an atom, the whole range
Of the huge system as the grains minute
Upon a tide-left shell ; how passing strange
That human animalculæ should moot
Undue comparisons, and overrate
Those dignities for order framed and not for empt:
state !

LXI.

Bend to the Lord supreme. Thy puny size
Mete with the measure of the mightier things
That round thee whirl, which to epitomize
Were vain, whose dizzy distance flings
Contempt on sciences ; and learn to lose
The pride of thy imagined worthiness
In the essential glories that effuse
Graces to men, yea let the perfectness
Of Jesu cast about thy trembling soul
Veiling its every spot in sunlike splendour roll.

LXII.

No more ; the signals warn us of retreat,
Abidance cannot be, my child, adieu ;
Thy dreams are fled, the vision is complete.
She said, and straightway distant cornets blew,
Echoes responded, and the sea-mew wailed
Upon its rocky nest, the frequent stroke
Of active wings the slumbering air assailed,
The earth-born mists and exhalations broke,
The opening sky a brief resplendence gave,
Which warmed the ebon cliff, and edged the rippling
wave.

LXIII.

And now the lowliest curtains of the night
Were with the streaks of morning beautified,
Whose beam incipient, put to flight
The nearest orbs ; abashed the planets hide
Their silver lamps and on the western line,
Urging with brandished club the dew-lapped Bull,
Headlong Orion hastened to decline ;
Whose martial sheen and aspect wonderful
Created mimic day, whose studded zone
Enclasped his flowing robe, and mocked the rising
sun.

LXIV.

‘And swift Eridanus, each glistening city
Upon his curling marge distributed,
Faded in seas of blue serenity,
No more in Padus’s imagined bed
Turin and Pavia lay ; the dewy eyes
Of morning with their waking lustre melt
The fair but unsubstantial palaces
On that celestial stream ; they sink, they felt
Her influence and fled, nor did the halls
Of placid Mantua remain, or stern Ferrara’s wal

LXV.

With night they hied, but still the Hydra’s lengt
Held half the heaven ; and his force alone
Repelled awhile the hesitating strength
Of Orient day ; arching his spiry cone
Above the dusky mantle of the sky,
He bore a chalice and ill omened crow
Upon his neck, but as the potency
Of ruddy dawn advanced, he too withdrew
Remorseful, shrinking to the oozy deep,
Where in disturbed repose the wily kindred sleep

LXVI.

thus as the Gospel light progressive steals
In the benighted Earth, proud Antichrist
Is forced to wane, and sorely baffled, feels
Dismemberment of power, sith his crest
Is shorn of influence : his priesthood too
Is willing thrall to subtlety, no more
Can brook the day-spring, but like yonder crow
Upon the Hydra sitting, do outpour
Unwonted cries, and sounds of noisy malice
Against those who would presume to touch their
Stolen chalice.

LXVII.

Up of Salvation, often sipped, alas !
By thousands who the elements alone
Partake, misguided, while they overpass
The mystery and the spiritual boon
Herein conveyed, but how should they perceive
The bliss of that soul-helping and divine
Refreshment who in bitter tears to grieve
Or sin have not yet learned ? how should that wine
Rant peace to hypocrites, or cause a feast,
To those whose lips profane of lawless pleasures
Taste ?

LXVIII.

'Tis done ! the horns of yonder orb protrude
And lift the veil of twilight, list ! the song
Of warbling minstrels from th' orchestral wood,
Tuned to the purling of the brook along
Each dark embowered vale, accord to raise
A universal thrill of melody ;
The waking breeze its diapason plays
Amongst the waving trees : my shell, thy lay
With night should cease ; and may these numbers
blend
With their pure thoughts, whose watchings oft at
Heaven's gate attend.

N O T E S.





NOTES.

CANTO I. PROEM.

“ Unusual flight above the beaten road.”

ICERO (De Orat. Lib. 1. c. 16,) informs us that Aratus the Cilician, though entirely ignorant of astronomy, treated of the heavens and the constellations in charming numbers. He was patronised by Antigonus King of Macedon, and as contemporary with Menander and Callimachus. Cicero was so enamoured of his writings, that he translated his Phænomena, some part of which translation is still extant. This poet is also quoted by St. Paul in the Acts of the Apostles, c. xvii. v. 18, where he reasons with the Athenians on the absurdity of the Pagan worship.

Stanza 2.

“ 'tis said within a ball of mist
Ever residing, He himself absorbs
The Rays.”

A long list of successive eminent Astronomers from

Galileo down to the present time, have determined that the sun is an opaque body surrounded with a luminous atmosphere resembling clouds, and consisting of different strata. These have been known to rise so as to form ridges of 75000 miles in length.

Stanza 8.

Erebus, according to Hesiod, together with Night were the offspring of Chaos, and exercised dominion in the infernal regions; which were supposed adjacent to the Elysian fields: an idea somewhat corresponding to the Parable of Dives and Lazarus, and to the opinions of the early church on Hades. The name Erebus is derived from the Hebrew בָּרַע to mingle; which also signifies the Evening, when the shadows of the west mingle with the light of day:

“Ἐκ χαοῦς δὲ Ἐρεβοῦς τε μελαινὰ τε Νόξ εγενούτο” a
Aristophanes, who herein agrees with Moses,

“Chaos was first and Night and gloomy Erebus
And vasty Tartarus.”

Stanza 9.

Saturn, otherwise Κρόνος or Time, son of Uranus Heaven, and called Saturnus, quod saturetur annis. Latantius de falsis Rel. lib. 1. supposed to be the Noah of the Scriptures, whom history reports to have migrated with his son Japhet into Italy, where he built a city called Chittim, the ancient metropolis of Etruria. It is said

posed that Noah was worshipped under the name of Janus by the Romans, whose image of two faces signified his connection with two worlds.

“ or who with Saturn old
Fled over Adria to the Hesperian fields.” MILTON.

Stanza 13.

The worship of Jupiter whose name is derived from πάτερ Ιανός, Πατηπος, was universal. He was the Ammon of the Africans, the Belus of Babylon, the Osiris of Ægypt : he was propitiated with the blood of pure victims, sheep and goats, and was considered superior to all deities.

Stanza 15.

The text referred to in this passage is Rev. xxii. 16, “I am the root and the offspring of David the bright and the morning star.”

Stanza 23.

Mercury revolves at the distance of 36 million miles from the sun.

Stanza 26.

The Nereids are said to have been the fifty daughters of Nereus, who chiefly lived in or about the Ægean sea, where they were wont to cheer their aged and royal parent

with marine choruses and dance. It is worthy of note that in the writings of Jonah the prophet the word ים signifies the Ocean, and מים through all Scripture, streams or floods: thus the fifty daughters of Nereus, symbolized the streams which pour into the sea from every land.

Stanza 28.

This idea is taken from Canticles vi. 10, “Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?” The original instructs us, that a gradation takes place in the spiritual illumination of the Church, at first she is compared to the dusk of twilight ערב, 2ndly, to the mild radiance of the moon, 3rdly, to the clearness of the sun, and 4thly, to the terrific array of an army by night with its luminous beacons or banners; which is in fact the radical import of נר.

Stanza 29.

The Cathedral Church of Hereford, at present undergoing extensive improvements and repairs; in 1053 it was entirely rebuilt by Ethelstan. Hereford was a Bishop’s see so early as the 5th century. It is extremely rich in tombs of high antiquity, and the whole style of the building is impressive, with an air of sacred majesty.



CANTO II.

Stanza 2.



HERE is nothing that warrants our assigning any limit to the action of the influence of gravity; it extends into the boundless void to the greatest assignable distance.

Supposing all the bodies of the solar system to be at rest in absolute space, and at their present relative distances from the central body, the sun, and from each other, no sooner does the influence of general gravitation go abroad into the system, than all the planets and comets begin to approach the sun, and in a few days the whole of the solar system must fall into the sun, and be destroyed. But that this fair order may be preserved, and at the same time accommodated to the extended influence of gravity, we see all danger effectually prevented, by the introduction of projectile forces and progressive motion; for upon the combination of these, properly adjusted with the variation of gravity, the planets are made to revolve round the sun in stated courses, by which their continual approach to the sun and to one another is restrained; and so exquisitely perfect is this adjustment,

that the present order of things is almost unchangeable. As gravity seems essential to the constitution of all the great bodies of the system, so it appears that periodical motion must be necessary for the permanency and order of every system of worlds soever. And if motion be thus necessary for the preservation of a comparatively small assemblage of bodies, and the whole of the starry heavens are one great assemblage affected by gravitation; we must still have recourse to periodical motion, in order to secure the establishment of the universe; for if there be nothing to counteract the direct influence of gravitation, and all the stars be so many suns, the centres of as many systems, (as is most reasonable to believe), the immensity of their distance would not prevent their forsaking their stations, or rushing with an approach continually accelerated, to the centre of general gravitation; and, thus in a short time, the whole glory of nature would end in a universal wreck. Now as the system of Jupiter and his satellites is but an epitome of the greater system to which it belongs, may not the solar system itself, be a faint representation of the movement of the universe, round whose centre the sun with its attendant planets, and an inconceivable multitude of like systems, do in reality revolve, according to the law of gravitation? Here then let us pause and contemplate a countless number of nicely adjusted motions, all proclaiming the sustaining hand of God; this is indeed a grand and overpowering thought, yet justified both by reason and analogy. And if the universe resemble our solar system in construction, what an inconceivable dis-

play of creation is here suggested ! but when we turn our thoughts toward the place which the motions of so many revolving systems are made to respect, here may be another unthought of universe in itself; wheel within wheel ; an example of material creation which must individually exceed all the other parts, though congregated in one amount; for as our sun is almost 4000 times bigger than all his attendants put together, it is not unreasonable to suppose the same thing with respect to the central kingdom.

But it is not necessary that this central body should be visible ; the great use of it is not to illuminate, but to govern the motions of all the rest. We judge, however, that the existence of such a central body is necessary according to known laws : for although two bodies not very unequal may be projected with such velocities and in such directions, that they will revolve for ever round their common centre of gravitation, yet they could hardly maintain any regularity of motion if a third body were added. It may indeed be said, that the same transcendent wisdom, which has so exquisitely adapted all the circumstances of our system, may so adjust the motions of an immense number of bodies, that they may accurately compensate one another for irregularity of action. But still the beautiful simplicity that is manifest in what we see and understand seems to warrant a like simplicity in the great system, and therefore renders the existence of such a great central regulator of the movements of the universe as the most probable supposition ; and sober reason, much less religion, will not be disposed to

revolt at so glorious an extension of the works of God, however much it may overpower our feeble sense. Nay, this analogy acquires additional weight and authority even from the transcendent nature of the universe, to which it directs our thoughts. Nothing less magnificent seems suitable to a Being of infinite perfections. We are not left only to conjecture in the known laws of astronomy in support of this conception. There are circumstances of analogy, which tend greatly to persuade us of its reality: there are circumstances which seem to indicate a connexion among the most distant objects of the creation visible from our habitation. The light by which the fixed stars are seen, is the same by which we behold our sun and his attendant planets. It moves with the same velocity, as we discover by comparing the aberration of the fixed stars, with the eclipses of Jupiter's satellites: it is refracted and reflected according to the same laws; it consists of the same colours. No opinion can be formed therefore of the solar light, which must not also be adopted with respect to the light of the fixed stars. The medium of vision must be acted on in the same manner by both, whether we suppose light to be the undulation of an ether, or the emission of matter from a luminous body. In either case, a mechanical connection obtains between those bodies, however distant, and our system; and this connection in mechanical properties induces us to suppose, that gravitation, which we know reaches to a distance which exceeds all conception, extends also to the fixed stars. If this be really the case, motion must ensue, a periodic motion, which is indis-

pensably necessary to their permanence. Now the result of astronomical observation indicates that some such changes really obtain among the fixed stars. This was first observed by our great astronomer, mathematician, and philosopher, Dr. Halley, in the early part of the last century ; and many subsequent astronomers of eminence have entertained similar opinions, as may be found in the pages of the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society*. These changes seem to indicate a motion in our system ; in relation to the fixed stars, most of which have moved towards the south. The stars in the northern quarters, on the one hand seem to widen their relative positions, while those in the south seem to contract their distances. Sir W. Herschel considers that a comparison of all these observed changes indicates a motion of our sun, with his attending planets toward the constellation Hercules. As a further circumstance of analogy with a periodical motion in the whole visible universe, we may adduce the remarkable periodical changes of brilliancy that are observed in many of the fixed stars, and whatever may be the cause of these alterations, they are very analogous to what we observe in our system ; the individuals of which by varying their position, and turning their different sides towards us, exhibit alterations of a similar kind, as for example, the aberration and dis-
parition of Saturn's ring. These circumstances therefore encourage us to suppose a similar constitution in our system to the rest of the heavenly host, and render it more probable that all are connected by one general bond, and regulated by a similar rule. And nothing is

so likely for constituting this connection as gravitation, and its combinations, viz., projectile force, and periodic motion, which by reciprocal opposition secure the permanency of the whole. But it must be at the same time observed, that notwithstanding the wise provision made for maintaining that order and utility, which we contemplate with adoring admiration, the day shall come, when, at the word of the Creator, the heavens shall pass away as a scroll that is folded up, and the stars in heaven shall fall, and the sun shall cease to give its light.—This note with a few alterations from the **CHRISTIAN ALMANACK**, 1843.

Stanza 3.

Mænalus, a mountain of repute in Arcadia, whose name and shape are assigned to one of the southern constellations.

Stanza 5.

St. Paul writing of the false teachers in Corinth observes, 2 Cor. xi. 14, “For Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.”

Stanza 16.

“The Pleiades.”

A name given to seven of the daughters of Atlas by Pleione, one of the Oceanides. The reason of the appellation is obvious, it being derived from the Greek

to sail; inasmuch as this constellation is chiefly conspicuous in spring, the time considered of old, most favourable for navigation. They were sometimes called Hesperides, from their situation in the west, where lay the gardens also of Hesperus, the son of Japhet, beyond the regions of the setting sun.—(*Stanza 18, See note 5, Canto 4.*)

Stanza 19.

“ The new Jerusalem.”

Of which a soul-lifting and ravishing idea is conveyed in the following terms, Rev. xxi. 11, “ Having the glory of God : and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jaspar stone, clear as crystal.”

Stanza 20.

“ On either side.”

This period of the year is denoted by Cancer, it being the property of this fish to crawl either backwards or forwards.

Stanza 25.

A conception from the strain of Iopas, Virgil, *AEn.* 1.

“ Citharâ crinitus Iopas

Personat auratâ, docuit quæ maximus Atlas.

Hic canit errantem Lunam, Solisque labores,

Arcturum, pluviasque Hyadas, geminosque Triones,

Quid tantum Oceano properent se tingere Soles

Hyberni, vel quæ tardis mora noctibus obstet.”

APPENDIX TO CANTO II.

IT is thought that Joseph's dream, mentioned in Genesis xxxvii. 9, may possess an allusion to the Zodiac and its signs. "Behold the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me,"—his eleven brethren answering to eleven of the celestial signs, and himself to the twelfth. General Vallancy has endeavoured in his *Collectanea de Rebus Hybernicis*, to trace out the analogy between the signs and the twelve stars of Jacob, which Dr. Hales in his analysis has improved upon, placed in a form intelligible. See Gen. xl ix.

REUBEN . unstable, (rather pouring out as waters) the sign Aquarius, represented as a man pouring out waters from an urn.

SIMEON } and **LEVI**. } The united brethren. The sign of Gemini.

JUDAH . . "the strong lion," The sign Leo.

ASHER . . "his bread shall be fat," the sign Virgo, anciently represented as holding a full ear of corn.

ISSACHAR . "a beast of burden," The sign Taurus.

DAN . . . "shall be a serpent by the way." Scorpio, "which biteth the horse's heel."

On the celestial sphere, the Scorpion is actually represented as biting the heel of Sagittarius.

JOSEPH . . . "his bow abode in strength." Sagittarius commonly represented even in the Asiatic Zodiacs, with the bow bent, and the arrow drawn up to the head. "The bow in full strength."

ZEBULUN. "a haven for ships." The crab.

GAD . . . a troop or army; reversed γ a fish, pisces.

BENJAMIN a ravening wolf. Capricorn.

On the AEgyptian sphere, represented by a goat with a wolf's head.

NAPTHALI The breathing or panting Ram. Aries.



CANTO III.

Stanza 1.

PURSUED with furies to the bounds
And crystal wall of heaven, which opening wide
Rolled inward, and a spacious gap disclosed
Into the wasteful deep. The monstrous sight
Struck them with horror backward, but far worse
Urged them behind, headlong themselves they threw
Down from the verge of heaven." MILTON.

Stanza 3.

Cepheus, a king of *Æthiopia*, who flourished b. c. 1263, the husband of Cassiopeia and father of Andromeda, one of the Argonauts. This verse refers to the blessed period spoken of in the Psalms when *Æthiopia* shall stretch out her hands unto God.

Stanzas 4 and 5.

Cassiopeia. She boasted herself fairer than the daughters of Nereus, and was punished as supposed in

the manner described in the Poem. In order to propitiate the gods, she exposed Andromeda to a sea monster which ravaged the country.

Stanza 8.

Berenice. When Ptolemy Euergetes king of Ægypt made that expedition into Syria foretold in Daniel xi. 7, 8, 9, Berenice his queen made a vow that she would consecrate her locks to his guardian deity, in case he returned unhurt. On his return therefore with safety and full success, she dedicated her hair in the temple, which Philadelphus had built on the promontory of Zephyrium in Cyprus. But her devoted locks being neglected by the priests, the title of Coma Berenices was affixed to a constellation of seven stars, near the Lion's Tail. Hygini Poet. Astr. Callimachus Catull. Prideaux's Con. Lib. 2.

Stanza 25.

Hercules, as we learn from the Orphic hymn, anciently symbolised the solar light. He was commonly represented clothed with a lion's skin; Parkhurst supposes that there was some confused notion of the expected Saviour associated with his labours and sufferings; especially from this passage of the hymn.

“Νοσῶν θελκτηρία παντα κομιζων.”

“Bringing a cure for all our ills.”

His twelve labours are also supposed to refer to the apparent progress of the sun through the signs of the Zodiac.



CANTO IV.

Stanza 4.

“ Apus, and Xiphias.”



PUS, the bird of Paradise.
Xiphias, the sword fish.

Stanza 5.

“ Nebulæ, and double stars.”

The beautiful star ε Bootes, is in fact composed of two stars, one of which is pale red, and the other a fine yellow. The double star ζ in Hercules is composed of two stars of unequal size, the former being of a beautiful bluish colour, and the other of a fine ash colour.

Nebulæ are vast clusters of small stars. There are other phenomena also of one kind, called by Dr. Huygens nebulous stars; i. e. objects surrounded with a faint atmosphere. This nebulous atmosphere frequently surrounds and includes nebulae. Of these phenomena the most brilliant and remarkable is seen in the constellation Orion. Huygens who discovered

ious appearance affirms that, "in viewing it we saw as we were through an opening, into a region of light!"

Stanza 6.

"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

Stanza 16.

"Triangles."

Hermes, called also Trismegistus, ter maximus, on whose wisdom Diodorus Siculus passes the greatest encomiums, is supposed to have received this title, from having introduced into Ægypt at a very early period the doctrine of Three Persons in one God, that is to say, soon after their apostasy to idols, in the time of the first Pharaohs, and before the persecution of the Israelites. The Chronicum Alexandrinum also records, that he held the doctrine of the Trinity, and Cedrenus in his Synopsis, and Suidas in his Lexicon bear testimony to the same effect. The most famous of his memorials were the columns extant at the age of Proclus 500 years A. c., on which were engraved symbols emblematic of the Trinitarian doctrine, and communicating the knowledge of the true God. These were seen and perused by Pythagoras and Plato, who thence deduced their notion of the Trinity. Manethon also studied them B. c. 260. Iamblichus the preceptor of Julian refers to them as the great solver of mysteries, and Bishop Stil-

Lingfleet observes "that had they been spurious, these great men, all of them so well versed in antiquities, would certainly have detected the deception." It is to be lamented that these venerable relics have long since disappeared. *Or. Sacræ, Lib. i. c. 2.*



CANTO V.

Stanza 4.

“ Argo.”

GHEN this expedition was completed Jason ordered the Argo to be drawn ashore at the Isthmus of Corinth, and consecrated to Neptune. The poets made her a constellation. The expedition is supposed to have taken place about the time when Deborah judged Israel 1263 years b. c. and 80 years before the taking of Troy. The Argo is reported to have cast anchor in the Phasis, now Faoz in Armenia.

“ Sirius or the watch-dog.”

Major Canis, a star by which the Ægyptians watched or observed the rising of the Nile. This star is preceded by the Canis Minor, or Anticanis.

Stanza 13.

“ There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.”

HEBREWS iv. 9.

Stanza 18.**“ Philopœmen.”**

A celebrated general of the Achæan league, confessed imitator of Epaminondas, who took the cap Laconia 188 b. c.; his death was universally lamented. He has justly been styled by his countrymen the greatest of the Greeks, since he made the last vigorous effort to sustain their freedom. I would refer the reader to an instructive and animating history of his life by Plutarch.

Stanza 23.

Arcadia, anciently called Drymodes from its abounding with oaks.



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CANTO VI.

Stanza 4.

“ Star.”



THE derivation of this word is interesting, it is found in the Persian سُتَر a name of Esther, who was the queen of Ahasuerus in the place of the repudiated Vashti ; the letters S t r being its radicals as well in English as in Persic.

Stanza 6.

Agreeable to the sentiment of these lines are the following passages from an eminent Christian writer :

“ Such is the nature of God, that he will not admit of any affection in thee, which is contrary to his will. He must alone have possession of thy chiefest love, and sit as a king within thy heart, upon his proper throne.”—
THOMAS A KEMPIS.

“ The love of the world, O Lord, bringeth not consolation, but desolation rather, it polluteth the mind and despiseth Thee, it doth not console but vex, its sweet-

ness changeth into bitterness, its fairness into horror, and where the love of this world reigns, Thy love enters not. Take from me the love of mundane pleasures, that I may abide in Thee for ever, &c. Contemplationes Id.

“ If thus we shall have fortified all our members, we shall be easily aroused to works of virtue ; our tongues will be occupied in praises and in glorifications of God, our ears in the hearing of sacred truth, our minds in the contemplation of doctrines spiritual, our hands will not be employed in rapine and covetousness, but in works of mercy and goodness, our feet will not lead us to theatres, to spectacles worthy of rebuke, and games equestrian, but to churches, houses of prayer, that from thence we may receive blessing, and escape the snares of Satan.”—*Homilia Chrysostom, in. Gen. 2.*

Stanza 27.

“ Faith.”

“ A Christian is not one without sin, but one to whom God imputeth not sin, because of his faith in Christ.”

“ Day and night the Devil rangeth about seeking whom he may devour, and unless he find us armed with the word of God and faith, he will devour us.”

“ As long as I live in the flesh, sin truly is in me, but because I am covered under the shadow of Christ's wings, and dwell without fear under that ample firmament of pardon, which is spread over me, God imputeth not the remnant of sin in me.”

Stanza 38.

A somewhat similar idea is found in Lucan's *Pharsalia* where speaking of the spirit of Pompey, he has the following lines:

“ Sequitur convexa tonantis
 Quà niger astriferis connectitur axibus aer,
 Quodque patet terras inter, lunæque meatus,
 Semidei manes habitant, quos ignea virtus
 Innocuos vitâ, patientes ætheris uni
 Fecit, et æternos animam collegit in ignes.”

“ up to that round it hies . . .

Where the dark ayre doth kisse the spangled skies
 For in that region 'twixt the moon and us,
 The Demi-gods and spirits generous
 Of those whom virtuous ardor guided well
 On earth, in everlasting glory dwell ! ”

Stanza 57.

“ Humility.”

I could not avoid transcribing two beautiful passages of Thomas a Kempis on this subject. “ A lowly knowledge of thyself is a more sure way to God, than a profound inquiry into science.”

“ And because men desire to be more great than humble, they are suffered to become vain in their imaginations.”

Stanza 65.

Eridanus, a river now called the Po or Padus, from the marshy land through which it glides; on whose banks are the cities mentioned in the Poem. It forms one of the southern constellations.





INDEX

TO THE VARIOUS CONSTELLATIONS REFERRED

TO IN THE PRECEDING LINES.

"Who can perceive them unpossessed,
By living soul, desert and desolate,
Only to shine, yet scarce to contribute,
Each orb a glimpse of light?" MILTON.

CANTO II.

	Stanza
Libra	3
Scorpio	4
Sagittarius	6
Capricornus	7
Aquarius	8
Pisces	11
Aries	12
Taurus	14
Gemini	17
Cancer.	20
Leo	23
Virgo	24

CANTO III.

	Stanza
Ursus major et minor,	
Draco	1
Cepheus	2
Cameleopardus	3
Cassiopeia	4
Andromeda and Persius	6
Berenice	8
Lacerta	10
Cygnus and Lyra . . .	11
Aquila	12
Hercules	25

CANTO IV.

	Stanza
Apus and Xiphias . . .	4
Crux	6
Ara	9
Columba.	11
Phœnix	13
Corona Borealis and Australis	15
Triangula	16
Centaurus	17

CANTO V.

Pavo, Grus, Cetus, Del-	
phinus, Indus, Piscis	
volans	2
Cameleon	3

	Stanza
Canis Major, Argo . . .	4
Quercus	9
Asterion, Chæra, Lynx,	
Leo Minor, Bootes .	11
Auriga	12
Serpentarius, Vulpecula	14
Antinous, Sagitta, Le-	
pus, Canicula, Equi-	
culus Pegasus . . .	15
Monosceros	16
Mænalus	19

CANTO VI.

Orion	64
Eridanus	65
Hydra	66

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